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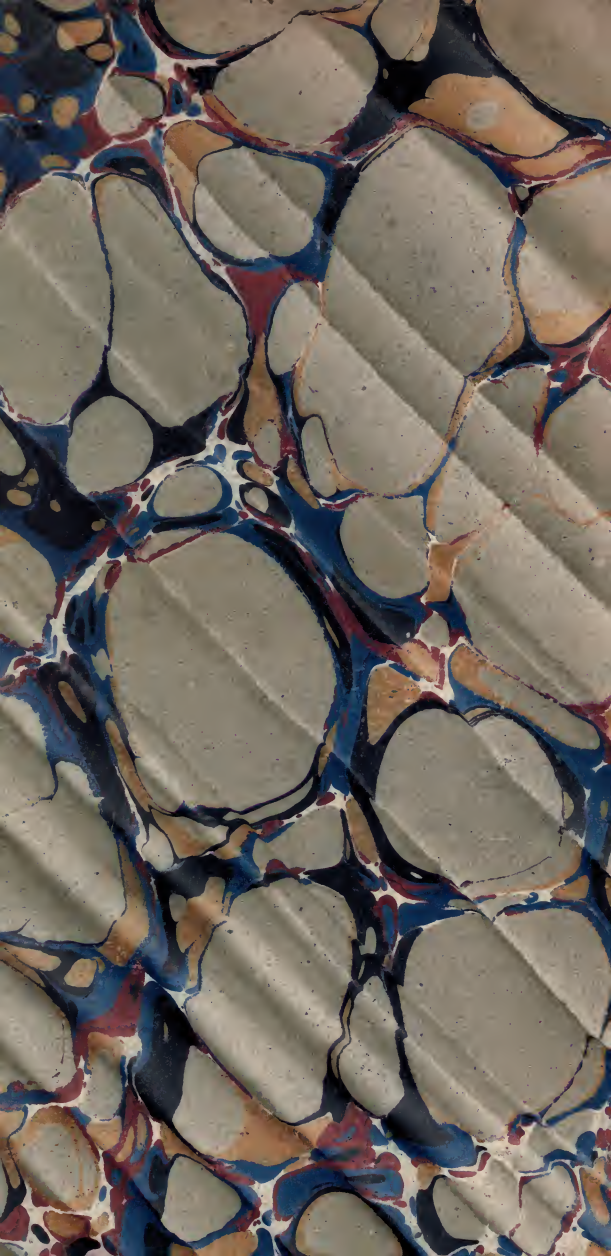


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JEAN FRÉDÉRIC OBERLIN.

*London. Pub<sup>d</sup> by J. Nisbet. 21. Berners Street. 1830.*

BRIEF MEMORIALS

OF

JEAN FRÉDÉRIC OBERLIN,

PASTOR OF WALDBACH, IN ALSACE;

AND OF

AUGUSTE BARON DE STAEL-HOLSTEIN;

TWO DISTINGUISHED ORNAMENTS OF THE FRENCH  
PROTESTANT CHURCH;

WITH AN

INTRODUCTORY SKETCH

OF THE HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY IN FRANCE, FROM THE  
PRIMITIVE AGES TO THE PRESENT DAY.

BY THE

REV. THOMAS SIMS, M. A.

*Author of "Christian Records"—"Sermons partly illustrative of the  
Devotional Services of the Church of England," &c. &c.*

LONDON:

JAMES NISBET, BERNERS STREET.

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## PREFACE.

England and France have been, for many ages, not only rivals, but, with occasional intervals of repose, enemies set in array. Their statesmen have opposed each other in the cabinet, with the zeal and subtilty usual amongst political antagonists. Their heroes have met on the plain, and displayed the valour as well as the skill of accomplished combatants. Such hostility, attended as it has ever been with far-spread evils, and scenes of inexpressible calamity, cannot, under any result, but awaken many painful associations. But there is a rivalry, neither tarnished by the arts of refined policy, nor stained by the gore of battle-fields—the rivalry in acts of humanity—the contest of Christian philanthropists, who strive to surpass each other in “doing good.”

Amongst such characters, Jean Frédéric Oberlin, a Lutheran clergyman, and the late

Baron de Staël, are justly entitled to distinction for their unwearied consecration of the faculties, both of mind and body, to the alleviation of human suffering, and the diffusion of religious knowledge amongst the poor: and it is partly with a view to do justice to persons of such undoubted excellence in a foreign country, but chiefly in order to stimulate persons at home to renewed efforts, and to point out a few paths of beneficence as yet scarcely trodden, that I have undertaken the grateful task of compiling these brief memorials.

The biography of individuals, whose benevolence included so wide a sphere, will necessarily comprise a succinct view of the general state of Christianity in France at the present moment; and the Historical Sketch prefixed, will, it is hoped, put the reader in possession of the principal features of religion in France, in ancient as well as modern days.

When on a journey to the Valleys of Piedmont, in the year 1823, in company with two

other gentlemen,\* I had the pleasure of becoming acquainted with the venerable pastor Oberlin; nor can I easily forget the Christian affection with which he first met and accosted my friends and myself, when, led by his grandson, on account of the dimness of his sight, the aged Pastor stopped us for a few moments, and addressed us in the court before we entered his house. A noble simplicity was at once conspicuous in his person, his address, his words, and the sentiments he uttered; and it was, of course, very delightful to see and to hear one, whose long life had been graced by a series of benevolent exertions, and had been equally distinguished for patience, zeal, self-denial, and generous sympathy.

Even during his life-time, scattered accounts of his extraordinary labours had found their way into various publications in England, France, and Germany. Since his decease, still more complete notices relative to his philanthropic efforts have appeared in different languages. That in the "Chris-

\* William Plenderleath and Durbin Brice, Esqrs.

tian Observer" was drawn up by the author of the present work. More recently, an interesting volume, entitled, "Memoirs of Jean Frédéric Oberlin," has been published, containing various documents, at full length, relative to events and circumstances, which, in the following work, are more briefly described, or but slightly alluded to.

As Oberlin's sphere of exertion lay in a sequestered mountainous district, his life seems calculated to excite deep interest, not only amongst Clergymen who have the care of country parishes, but amongst benevolent individuals of the laity resident in villages, and even amongst the peasantry. And therefore, well knowing, from personal observation, that numerous and extensive districts in the United Kingdom are susceptible, and actually in need of, many of the improvements, rural, social, and religious, which Oberlin introduced at the Ban de la Roche, I have been anxious to interweave frequent and copious remarks, bearing directly upon such improvements in this country. Keeping this object in view, it appeared

to me desirable that the volume should be prepared in such a form as to be calculated, from its size and price, for extensive circulation.

Whilst the life of Oberlin seems to present, in many respects, a model for the introduction of improvements into country villages; the numerous and truly noble efforts of the Baron de Staël, will distinctly shew what benefits may be conferred upon populous cities, and even a whole kingdom, by young men of rank and fortune, when, with a strong and constant bias of the mind towards comprehensive, yet well-digested, and feasible plans of beneficence, they attempt to stem the swelling current of national crime.

Various circumstances—amongst others, doubtless, fluctuations in commerce, distress in agricultural districts, and consequent want of employment—have, for some years past, increased the amount of general, and especially of juvenile delinquency. At such a crisis, one of the most encouraging symptoms



would be, an addition from amongst the ranks of the younger Nobility and Gentry of the land, to the number of those genuine Christian patriots, who, by their prudent zeal, and active benevolence, endeavour to promote the happiness of their fellow-subjects, and secure the welfare of the realm, by advancing the interests of religion at home, as well as abroad; watching, with wakeful vigilance, over the concerns of the people, of every class and condition; and adorning the station which they themselves occupy, and the sphere in which they move, by their virtues and their piety.



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AN

**INTRODUCTORY SKETCH**

OF THE

**HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY IN FRANCE.**

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As the names of the two distinguished Philanthropists, whose efforts form the substance of this volume, are intimately connected with the progress of pure religion in France in modern days, it seems very suitable to prefix a SKETCH of the HISTORY of CHRISTIANITY in FRANCE, from the primitive ages to the present time.

I. The extensive conquests of the Romans appear to have given the early Christian teachers great facilities in their attempts to introduce the Gospel into different countries. From Judæa it soon

spread to Rome, and afterwards to Great Britain, Spain, and France—then called Gaul—in the West.

As early as the second century there were flourishing Christian churches at Lyons, and at Vienne,\* a small city, about 15 miles from Lyons, on the banks of the Rhone. They had been founded by Greek Christians, apparently in consequence of the commercial intercourse established between Smyrna and Lyons.

In the year 177 a cruel persecution of the churches of Lyons and Vienne took place, an account of which was afterwards transmitted to the Christians of Asia Minor and Phrygia, in an Epistle by Irenæus, from Lyons. From this valuable document we learn that there were in all forty-eight martyrs. One of them was a

\* I saw this city in the year 1814, and observed old buildings there of Roman origin, as well as Roman Catholic churches and convents that had suffered from the French Revolution. The unhappy Governor by whom our Lord was unjustly condemned, Pontius Pilate, having been banished by the Emperor Caligula for mal-administration, committed suicide in this city.



young nobleman, named Vettius Agathus, who cheerfully avowed himself a Christian, and so ably defended the cause of his fellow-Christians, that he was styled their advocate. Pothinus, the venerable bishop, above 90 years of age, was extremely ill-treated, and, within two days, died in prison. Attalus of Pergamos, was an aged Christian, and a chief pillar of that church. He was taken round the amphitheatre, preceded by a written accusation, "This is Attalus the Christian." After having been imprisoned, and tormented in public, he was thrown to the wild beasts, with a pious and charitable physician, named Alexander, a Phrygian by birth, but who had long resided in Gaul. Sanctus, of Vienne, a deacon, replied to questions respecting his name, country, and condition, "I am a Christian, which is to me name, and country, condition, and every thing." When plates of hot iron were applied to his body, he remained unmoved. He, and Maturus, a Neophyte, were dragged by wild beasts in the amphitheatre, and then burnt to death upon hot iron bars. Blandina, a female, being tormented in various ways, exhibited surprising fortitude, constantly refused to honour the pagan idols, encouraged a youth of

15 years, named Ponticus, amidst his sufferings, and, being exposed to the rage of a wild bull, at length expired. The enemies of the martyrs afterwards collected their lacerated remains, burnt them, and threw their ashes into the Rhone, vainly hoping to prevent the accomplishment of their hope to partake of the future resurrection of the just.

The writer of the admirable epistle already alluded to, Irenæus, afterwards became a Bishop, and died a martyr at Lyons. From a letter which he wrote to his friend Florinus, it appears that Irenæus had been brought up in his youth under Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna; "I can describe," says he, "the very spot in which Polycarp sat and expounded, the manner of his life, the figure of his body, the sermons which he preached to the multitude; how he related to us his converse with John, and the rest of those who had seen the Lord; how he mentioned their particular expressions, and the things he had heard from them of the Lord, of his miracles, of his doctrines. These things, through the mercy of God, I heard with seriousness; I wrote them—not on paper, but on my heart; and

ever since, through the grace of God, have a genuine remembrance of them.”—In this a beautiful example for young persons in every age and land! He was so desirous to instruct the people of Lyons when a presbyter, that though his native tongue was Greek, he applied himself to the study of the barbarous Celtic language of Gaul. And, in this instance also, he remains a pattern—a pattern to those Clergymen who undertake the care of parishes where a language foreign to their own prevails, as in Ireland; a country where, as in Wales, the services and sermons ought, in many districts, to be both in English and the Irish Celtic dialect, until the latter shall fall into disuse. When Irenæus became at length Bishop of Lyons, like his predecessor, Pothinus, he became also a martyr, in the reign of Severus. Being taken, with several of his friends, to the top of a hill, there were crosses placed on the one hand, and idols on the other. The choice was then offered to them, either to worship the idols and live, or be crucified. They chose the latter alternative, and suffered martyrdom.\* The

\* There is a church in the ancient part of the city of Lyons, still called the Church of Irenæus. The bodies of Irenæus, and other martyrs, are said to lie underneath.

writings of Irenæus have been always esteemed a treasure in the Christian church. He was the first, it is said, who proposed the word *Lateinos*, written in Greek letters, as the probable interpretation of the mysterious number 606 in the 13th chapter of the Revelation of St. John; an interpretation which, if just, appears to refer the prediction to the corrupt ecclesiastical system of Rome—the Church of Rome being distinctively the Latin Church, in which the services are still obstinately retained in Latin, though to its members in general an unknown tongue.

Whilst the historic facts just adduced shew, that when Roman conquest and commercial intercourse had paved the way for the introduction of the Christian religion into Gaul, pious Greek Christians availed themselves of the door of access thus opened, and sent Christian teachers from beyond the Alps, and even from beyond the Adriatic, to impart the benefits of the Gospel to

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It is the most ancient church in the city, constructed, apparently, on the foundations of another still more ancient. The arches and windows are circular; the floor is composed of brick.

the Colonies established at Lyons and Vienne, and to their less civilized and enlightened fellow-creatures in the adjoining regions, their conduct remains a legacy and an example bequeathed to other ages; and the Church of Smyrna presents, in this respect, an instructive lesson to such a Church as that of England, and such a city as that of London, as well as other great commercial-cities of the British empire, from which ships sail to the remotest quarters of the world. The great religious Societies, the Bishops, and the Nobility connected with the United Church of England and Ireland, cannot indeed neglect the high and honourable duty that devolves upon them to make more strenuous efforts than hitherto, without incurring deep and fearful responsibility, standing as that Church does, as a Princess amongst the Reformed Churches in Christendom.

Other churches, besides those of Lyons and Vienne, were founded in France, during the second century; and in the third, Christianity spread very rapidly throughout the various provinces of Gaul; and by the labours of many pious men, especially Saturninus the first Bishop of Toulouse, churches were planted in Paris, Tours,



Arles, and Narbonne. In proportion as these triumphs of the Gospel were achieved, the gradual destruction of Druidism, which had long prevailed in Gaul, took place, as well as a departure from the Pagan forms of worship introduced by the Romans. Thus was pure and unadulterated Christianity generally prevalent in Gaul during the first three or four centuries; and so eminent were some of the preachers of that country, that when Pelagian errors began to spread in Britain, Lupus, Bishop of Troyes, and Germanus, Bishop of Auxerre, came from Gaul for the express purpose of withstanding those false religious opinions; which they did by preaching in the churches, and in the open country, to immense crowds.

In the fifth century, the Franks under their kings, particularly Clovis, conquered Gaul and expelled the Romans. Through his Queen Clotilda's influence, both Clovis and his army professed themselves Christians and were baptized at Rheims. In France, however, as in other countries,—there is too much reason to fear—superstition and error gradually gained ground; the clergy became more ignorant, idle, and worldly; the people more corrupt, and the



churches more under the influence of the church of Rome; although image-worship—one of the worst features of Popery—was not countenanced in France so late as the eighth century, when Charlemagne assembled a council at Frankfort, which condemned the use of images. Charlemagne, however, as well as Pepin his Father, made such enormous grants of territory and power to the Popes, that they became able to tyrannize over the churches of Italy and other countries, and usurp a dominion over the Christian world, foretold, as well as strongly condemned, by the Scriptures.

II. At length, the gross mist of superstition having for some centuries enveloped the churches of France, Divine Providence raised up Christian ministers of great piety and zeal to recal the deluded people to the knowledge of that holy religion which had once shone in its genuine purity amongst their ancestors. The principal of these were Peter de Bruys, a priest of Toulouse, Henry, a monk, Esperon, and Peter Waldo. The three former were preachers of extraordinary zeal in the south of France, who strenuously resisted the encroachments of papal error. The celebrated

Peter Waldo was a rich merchant of Lyons, whose mind became particularly impressed with the importance of religion from witnessing the sudden death of one of his friends after supper. He, in consequence, read the Latin New Testament, called the Vulgate, with great attention, and discovered, as the fruit of his research, that the religion of the church of Rome was totally different from that revealed in the Scriptures. As the Latin tongue had long ceased to be the vulgar tongue in France, and had been superseded by a dialect composed of Latin, Frank, &c. intermixed, he translated—or, as the historian Mosheim thinks, employed a priest whose name was Stephanus de Evisa, about the year 1160, to translate the four Gospels, with other books of Holy Scripture, into the language spoken in that vicinity. Another work, composed of sentences from the ancient doctors, was also compiled. These efforts led the way to a reformation of religion, to a great extent. Waldo became a public teacher of religion, and a liberal distributor of alms to the poor who flocked to hear him. His numerous followers were, in fact, usually, and long afterwards, called “the poor men of Lyons;” scornfully called so; although they might well deem

themselves happy if entitled to the benediction pronounced by their Saviour on "the poor in spirit," and those "persecuted for righteousness' sake."\* Their assemblies at length awakened opposition from the Archbishop of Lyons, and Waldo and his disciples were compelled to retire from the city. He went to Dauphiné, where his preaching gained many converts. Being driven from thence he retired into Picardy. After very successful labours he was compelled to depart; he then went to Germany, and lastly to Bohemia, in 1176, his followers settling at Satz and Laun, on the river Eger. There he terminated his laborious career in the year 1179. The descendants of his disciples in Bohemia were fellow-sufferers with the disciples of a later Reformer, John Huss. The Christians now called "Moravians," or, "United Brethren," are a branch from the old Lyonnese Waldenses who retired

\* They were also, probably, called Waldenses, after Waldo; but the Waldenses of Piedmont appear, from the testimony of Roman Catholic authors, to have existed as a body apart from the church of Rome, before the appearance of Waldo. The term Waldenses, or Valdenses, is derived from the valleys they inhabited; and Beza's opinion was, that Peter Waldo's name was derived from the Waldenses, not their's from his.

to Bohemia; one of whose Bishops, Stephen, (settled near Austria, and afterwards a martyr at Vienna,) with one of his colleagues, consecrated the three first bishops of the church of the "United Brethren."\* Indeed there is reason, from ancient documents, to believe, that the disciples of Waldo, particularly Barthelemi de Carcassonne, a Bishop, planted churches in Bulgaria, Croatia, Dalmatia, and Hungary, in the course of the thirteenth century; and that the first effort of that charitable and illustrious man at Lyons, proceeded step by step to such an extent, that many kingdoms, and amongst others Great Britain, as the seat of the Lollards, derived the benefit of Christian illumination in a dark and superstitious age.

As Waldo was a rich merchant, it will not be considered a misplaced observation, I hope, to

\* Before Peter Waldo became a Reformer, and even before Peter de Bruys, a priest of Toulouse, and Hénry, a monk of Toulouse, had formed large bodies of Seceders from the Church of Rome, many of the French clergy had opposed the innovations imposed by Pope Gregory VII. and Pope Nicolas II. Persons in holy orders, therefore, could not be wanting amongst the Albigenses and Waldenses of France. The episcopacy of the Waldenses is discussed at large in Peyran's Historical Defence, pp. 482—505.

remark, that the opulent merchants of our great commercial cities have it in their power to assist materially in the propagation of that holy religion to which they, like other classes of persons, are so much indebted, as a religion favourable to civilization, and to those moral principles by which honourable commerce is sustained. They might with great facility support, by liberal contributions, the societies that aim to extend the benefits of Christianity to uncivilized nations; assist missionaries, by such support, to translate the Scriptures into various languages; give those disinterested men a free passage in their ships to distant quarters of the globe; and encourage the efforts of discreet chaplains at the factories.

From the labours of Waldo and his associates there sprang up an immense body of Christians averse to the corrupt doctrines of the church of Rome. They existed in Picardy under the appellation of Picards, and in the South of France, from the Pyrenees to the Alps, under that of Albigenses.\* They were in correspondence with

\* They were so called from the town of Albi. The English having possession of Guienne, adjoining the



the Waldenses of the Valleys of Piedmont, who had maintained the same unshaken opposition to the prevailing errors in religion. So numerous were the Albigenses, that they attracted the attention and indignation of the court of Rome, and Pope Innocent III. instigated the Roman Catholics of France to undertake a crusade for their extermination. The cruel wars carried on against them for this purpose, under the Counts de Montfort, lasted for thirty years, and the tribunal of the Inquisition was invented by Dominic the Monk, for the purpose of torturing them.

III. These sufferers having borne their testimony, under accumulated sufferings, in the thirteenth century, it pleased God, at the era of the Reformation, to raise up another fresh body of preachers and people, Hugonots as they were often styled—Protestants in the later acceptance of that term—to testify anew against the various and enormous corruptions by which Christianity had been dis-

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territory of the Albigenses, for about 300 years, the doctrines of the Albigenses spread amongst them, and were introduced into England. Those who embraced them were called Lollards, or Psalm-singers.

figured in France. At that period Olivetan, a Vaudois minister of Piedmont, translated the Bible into French, and the Vaudois defrayed the expense of printing it for the use of the Infant Reformed Church of France; whilst Calvin, a native of Picardy, instructed students for the ministry in that church at Geneva.

Preachers of extraordinary abilities appeared at this time as reformers in France. James le Fevre, Gerard le Roux, and William Farel,—the latter distinguished for his powerful eloquence,—preached the reformation at Meaux, under the sanction of Brissonet, bishop of that see. John le Clerc became the founder of a reformed church at Metz, in Lorraine, and afterwards died there, a martyr for the truth he preached. Aymond de Lavoy was a minister, and afterwards a martyr at Bordeaux. Peter Viret, a Swiss reformer, remarkable for his enchanting eloquence, at the request of the French protestants, preached the doctrines of the Reformation in the cities of Lyons and Nismes. He was afterwards invited by Jane, Queen of Navarre,—who countenanced the reformers, whom her relatives the kings of France persecuted,—to preach at Bearn, where he died.

During this struggle between truth and error, Francis I., Henry II., Henry III., and Francis II., encouraging rather than repressing the bigotry of the Roman Catholic priesthood, many martyrs fell victims to their hatred in various provinces of France; and, amongst others,

Peter Bonpain, minister of Aubigny, at Paris;

Husson, an apothecary of Blois, condemned by the parliament of Rouen for dispersing religious books;

John l'Anglois, an attorney at Sens, at the request of his uncle Barville, archdeacon of that cathedral;

Lewis de Marsae, an officer of noble birth, at Lyons;

Simon Lalve, at Dijon;

Peter Serre, once a Roman Catholic priest, at Toulouse;

Philippa de Luns, the young widow of a Gascon nobleman, at Paris;

Du Bourg, a celebrated counsellor, in the same city.

Notwithstanding, however, the severe opposition from those in power, such multitudes had been induced to renounce the communion of the



church of Rome, that in the year 1560 there were above 2000 reformed congregations.

In consequence of the unrelenting enmity of the Popes, and their adherents in France, especially the dukes of Guise, who were bent on the extirpation of the Protestants, a civil war ensued; the Protestants defending themselves under the command of the celebrated admiral de Coligny, and the king of Navarre, during the minority of Charles IX. and regency of Catherine de Medicis, against the dukes of Guise and their partisans.

Great and numerous calamities were the result. Many thousands perished on the field of battle. Various persecutions also took place. Three hundred Protestants were shut up in the church at Tours, and afterwards put to death. At Meaux 400, in Provence 1500, at Rheims 500 Protestants fell victims.

This war was followed by a deceitful peace, during which Catherine de Medicis, and her son Charles IX., perfidiously laid the plan for the Bartholomew massacre at the time of the young

king of Navarre's marriage with a Roman Catholic princess. During this massacre, in the year 1572, Coligny fell a victim at Paris, with about 6000 Protestants. From Paris the destruction spread to other parts of the kingdom. About 6000 were slain at Rouen, 1000 at Orleans, 1600 at Lyons, 200 at Meaux, and great numbers in other places.\*

The civil war was renewed after these atrocities, during which many thousand Protestants died of famine at the siege of Rochelle. At length, Henry, king of Navarre, succeeded, under the title of Henry IV., to the French crown, and became a Roman Catholic, but granted religious liberty to the Protestants by the celebrated Edict

\* Doubtless many humane persons in France, though tinctured themselves with superstition, condemned so atrocious an act as that of the massacre on St. Barthomew's eve. Amongst others distinguished for humanity on that occasion, the following names should be recorded. The viscount d'Orthe, commandant of Bayonne, replied to Charles IX. that the soldiers in garrison, uniting in feeling with their general, were unwilling to be executioners. The count de Tende, commandant of Provence, sent a similar reply. The bishop of Dijon,—and he was not the only prelate, I believe, who did so,—received those Protestants who sought shelter in his palace.

of Nantes. This edict Louis XIV. revoked in 1685, and thus opened a new source of calamities in France. The Protestant ministers were sentenced to banishment, their churches destroyed, the people condemned to the galleys, expelled from offices and employments, and compelled to wander to other countries to exercise their trades, whilst dragoons were quartered in their houses to annoy and torture them.

IV. Thus, deprived of the exercise of their religious privileges, the Protestants who remained in France seldom met for public worship, and then, at night, in woods and desert places where they might be unobserved by their enemies. During that mournful period, when their pastors were liable to death by the law for discharging ministerial duties, a minister named Paul Rabaut, at imminent risk of life, visited the scattered Protestant communities in Languedoc, baptized their children secretly, and preached to them. Louis XVI. however, when public opinion in France was becoming adverse to persecution, granted the Protestants, in the year 1787, privileges of which they stood in need. Subsequently, the French revolution fell with terrible force upon the once

gorgeous and tyrannical church of France, and occasioned the murder or exile of its bishops and priests, and the forfeiture of ecclesiastical property.\*

\* Before the French revolution, the Gallican, or French Roman Catholic Church, consisted of 19 archbishoprics and 118 bishoprics, which were abolished at that period. By the Concordat between the late emperor Napoleon and the pope, 10 archbishops and 50 bishops were appointed. At the Revolution the churches were closed or sold, and converted into stables and storehouses. When Napoleon deemed it politic to re-establish, not in its pristine, but with a moderate degree of power, that religion which had been rejected by the republic, the allowance to the clergy, decreed from the public treasury, consisted of about £1,000. a year to a bishop, and £40. to a parish priest. In 1814 that sum amounted to 18 millions of francs, but the greater encouragement given to the clergy by the late Louis XVIII. and the present king of France, Charles X., has raised it to 40 millions. An immense portion of this is appropriated to cathedrals and the dignitaries of the church. The inferior priests, who have from 750 to 1,000 francs, have also perquisites attached to the discharge of some of their peculiar functions, which they receive from their parishioners. There were formerly as many as 10,000 priests, monks, and nuns, at Paris. The number of priests at present scarcely amounts to 800 ; in 1817 the ecclesiastics of every description in that city, together with nuns, did not exceed 3,320. The nomination of bishops is retained as a prerogative of the king ; the pope has that of institution. The " Diocesan Seminary" at Paris, in which young men are educated for the church, contains 300 students,

It was re-established, however, by the late emperor Napoleon, who also granted to the Protestants that pecuniary support from the State which he afforded to Roman Catholics, and the same support has been continued by the kings

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of whom 150 are in the College near the church of St. Sulpice, and 150 at a preparatory College at Issy.

The "Séminaire du Saint Esprit" is under the superintendence of the priests of the mission, and contains 40 students intended to supply parishes in the French colonies. The "Séminaire des Missions étrangères" is established for the instruction of missionaries who are to be sent to India and China.

The "Institut des Frères des Ecoles Chrésiennes" is an institution for training schoolmasters. There are about 700 schools for boys in various parts of France, in which those frères, or brethren, are the masters. They partly resemble monks, but are not permitted by the French laws to take vows of perpetual celibacy. Convents were abolished by the revolutionary laws, but nuns, whose object is the care of the sick in hospitals, or the instruction of female children, have since received support from the government. They are not permitted, however, to take perpetual vows. Napoleon authorised 1253 convents in the kingdom. Louis XVIII. and Charles X. have permitted the additional number of 478. Of these convents, there are about 30 in Paris. Amongst the various orders, the Sisters of Charity stand pre-eminent for usefulness. In number the Sisters of Charity are about 4000 in France, and 400 in the city of Paris, continually engaged in teaching female children, or attending the sick in hospitals or in private houses.



of France who have succeeded to the crown since his fall.\*

In the year 1815, however, an ebullition of sanguinary rage, the effect of mixed but corrupt political and religious feelings in the enemies of the Protestants, occasioned the massacre of not less than 300 Protestants in the city of Nismes, and it is probable that great numbers perished in the department of the Gard.

A remarkable event occurred at Lyons, in the years 1825 and 1826, namely, the secession of about 1500 Roman Catholics from the church of Rome to the reformed church.† The seceders are chiefly of the class of mechanics at Lyons. The number of 1500 also includes 80 peasants at the small village of Ste. Consorce near Lyons, which contains 120 inhabitants. A dispute on parochial matters, and temporary privation of Roman Catholic service at church induced these peasants to examine the catechism of the Protestants, and,

\* No. I. in the Appendix contains a condensed statement, relative to the actual condition of the Protestant churches throughout France, with remarks.

† I obtained the information communicated when at Lyons, from the most authentic source.

approving of it, they joined the reformed church. At the town of Tarare, about 10 Roman Catholics united themselves to about 100 old Protestants who reside there. An aversion to the political and religious tenets of a body of violent Jesuits appears, in a great measure, to have induced many at Lyons to express their dislike of popery, and their preference for the Protestant faith. They adopted a change of religious opinions without cordially receiving all the essential truths of the Gospel. Others were actuated by motives more strictly pious, and after a candid search after truth. The secession took place within the space of about twelve months. Examples of the same kind occur now but rarely. It appears that the seceders were at first too readily admitted members of the reformed church. The instruction given them was too superficial. At present, however, one of the pastors gives private weekly instruction in the evening, and explains the Scriptures.

A Letter written by a merchant of Lyons, (M. Mollard) about the same period, and which contained his reasons for embracing Protestantism, was the effect rather than the cause of the more general secession, which had previously commenced. With a view to guard against the ope-

ration of unworthy motives in the seceders, it is a general rule amongst the Protestants that no pecuniary relief shall be given to the poor proselytes till three years after their first declaration of their attachment to the reformed faith;\* except in very peculiar cases, in which the pastors may, at their discretion, consider a deviation from the rule expedient.

Such have been the remarkable vicissitudes to which the Christian Religion in ancient times, the churches of the Albigenses, during the dark ages, and the Protestant church since the Reformation, have been subject; vicissitudes in which it does not seem difficult to trace alike privileges and judgments—"the goodness" as well as "the severity of God;" vicissitudes that present so many warning lessons to all Christians to improve seasons of tranquillity, and means of grace, when vouchsafed, lest those seasons should be exchanged for those of discord and calamity, and those means, however abundant, should be removed.

\* How far such a mode of proceeding may be proper in the present circumstances of Ireland, when proselytes to the Protestant faith present themselves, those can probably best determine whose local knowledge and peculiar situation both enable and require them to decide.



A  
BRIEF MEMORIAL  
OF  
JEAN FRÉDÉRIC OBERLIN,  
PASTOR OF WALDBACH.

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CHAPTER I.

OBERLIN IS EDUCATED AT STRASBOURG—DESCRIPTION OF BAN DE LA ROCHE—PASTORAL EFFORTS OF STUBER—ADULT SCHOOLS.

THE Lutheran Clergyman, renowned not only in France, but in other countries, for his unwearied efforts of philanthropy, and usually called Pastor Oberlin, was born at Strasbourg, in the year 1740. His father was a respectable schoolmaster in that city. Being of an ardent disposition, he began to be fond of military exercises in

his youth; but, partly by his father's persuasion, partly by the example of his elder brother, Jeremiah James Oberlin, who was afterwards distinguished for his researches as an antiquary and philologist, he applied, as he grew up, to literary pursuits.

When a student at the University, he frequently attended the sermons of Dr. Lorentz, a devout preacher at Strasbourg, whose evangelical statements of Christian truth, although in unison with the doctrines taught by the Reformers, were not approved of by some of the learned professors. From that Clergyman's sermons he appears to have derived much benefit; and on the 1st of January, 1760, in his twentieth year, he drew up and adopted a solemn act of self-dedication\* to God, at Strasbourg, which he renewed on the 1st of January, 1770, at Waldbach, in the Ban de la Roche. Having finished his studies, he was ordained minister, but he remained some years without taking the actual charge of a parish. In the capa-

\* See Appendix, No. II.

city of private tutor in the family of a distinguished medical man, he acquired a knowledge of medicine particularly useful to him in the wild district called the Ban de la Roche, where he undertook pastoral duties in 1767, when a pious Lutheran Clergyman, named Stuber, removed to Strasbourg.

The Ban de la Roche is an elevated territory, at the distance of 12 leagues from Strasbourg. La Roche was a castle, around which a ban (or district) lay, containing about 9,000 acres; also denominated Steintal, or Stoney Valley. It is a valley connected with an isolated range of mountains of volcanic origin, called Champ de Feu, detached from the chain of mountains called the Vosges. It comprises two parishes, namely, Waldbach and Rothau. In that of Waldbach there are five separate villages, and three churches; the names of the villages, Waldbach, Foudai, Belmont, Belle-Fosse, and Zolbach. M. Oberlin's parish was Waldbach,\* and he resided in the vil-

\* Before the year 1806, M. Oberlin discharged

lage of that name, which stands at an elevation of 1,800 feet above the level of the sea. This territory belonged to Protestant Noblemen, as feudal lords of the soil; and, in the reign of Louis XV. was inhabited by about 100 families, partly refugees on account of religion; who enjoyed that religious liberty which was an article of stipulation upon the union of Alsace to France.

The Ban de la Roche was the seat of deplorable ignorance when M. Stuber became the pastor, in 1750. The schoolmasters were rather in need of instruction themselves than competent to teach children, and the school-rooms were in a wretched condition. M. Stuber selected some young men, more competent to become superintendents (for the name of a schoolmaster had become disreputable) of the schools. By the liberality of a friend, he was also enabled to give rewards, in addition to their small stipends,

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the pastoral duties of Rothau as well as Waldbach. From that period his second Son (Charles Conservé) undertook the pastoral care of Rothau.

to those whose pupils made the best progress. He had spelling and reading lessons printed for their use; by which means the children learned so fast, that their elder brothers and sisters, and even their parents, expressed a wish to be instructed. The consequence was, that Adult Schools were formed during the winter evenings, and part of every Sunday. So fully did Oberlin follow up the system commenced by his predecessor, that I was assured by his son-in-law, the Pastor Graff, that all the adults of his parish, which contains about 4,000 souls, could, without one exception, read the Scriptures.

When M. Stuber procured 50 copies of the Bible from Basle, he divided each into three parts, and thus had 150 books in use at the same time;—a plan which, in some circumstances, might be advantageously followed, especially in schools; children being apt to destroy a Bible by careless treatment, before they have made great progress in reading it.

After a residence of six years, the wise, pious, and benevolent Stuber removed to the town of Barr; but in four years returned to his former charge in the Steinthal, to the great joy of the parishioners, who had witnessed the difference between a zealous and a less devoted minister. At length, in the year 1767, being invited to a new pastoral charge, St. Thomas's Church, at Strasbourg, this pious Clergyman, who had buried his wife at Waldbach, left the Ban de la Roche.

The happy attempt of M. Stuber to induce even adults to learn to read, must not be passed by without one or two observations.

It is a subject to be deplored, that, even at the distance of three centuries from the Reformation, such multitudes may be found in the parishes of England, Ireland, and Wales, who are unable to read the Bible in the vulgar tongue, although those founders of our Reformed Church, Tindal, Cranmer, Latimer, Ridley, and others, died martyrs for their zeal in securing that



great privilege for its members. It is probable, however, that, in numerous instances, the ignorant poor, who received no education in their youth, would avail themselves of the means of learning, if affectionately and judiciously proposed to them. The case of M. Stuber is not singular. In the evening schools kept by the Masters of Welsh Circulating Schools established by the Rev. Griffith Jones, the adults constituted often two-thirds of the scholars. The late Rev. Mr. Charles succeeded in inducing great numbers of adults in Wales to learn, and many were able to read in the course of three months after they commenced. In Ireland, also, the grown up inhabitants are often eagerly desirous to learn to read the Testament in the Irish tongue. Not less so were the Wendens—a Slavonian race inhabiting Upper and Lower Lusatia, Silesia, &c. when the New Testament was translated into their language above a century ago.

Such encouraging facts may well lead to similar efforts in parishes, in any part of the



United Kingdom, where past negligence has left many of the adults in a state of ignorance. Were those winter evenings, or Sunday afternoons, which are too often mis-spent at the ale-house, thus beneficially employed, they would lead the poor to degrees of present happiness, of which they are not now aware, whilst they might be the means of rendering them ornaments to the Christian church on earth, and of preparing them for the joys of the church triumphant.

It is to be feared that, in the generality of instances, Clergymen, and other benevolent persons, seldom think of the importance of education, except in reference to children. The condition of uninstructed adults who cannot read the Word of God, is strongly entitled, however, to their consideration and solicitude. The simple fact, that persons of mature and even advanced age, baptized within the pale of a Reformed Church, should be found in our parishes, debarred, through ignorance, from perusing "the words of eternal life," is

appalling to the compassionate and religious mind. And the more so, because the art of reading may be so easily acquired, if only some of those hundreds or thousands of Sabbaths, of which they must hereafter render an account, were occupied in acquiring it. Doubtless, amongst other objects of inquiry by an Incumbent, that of ascertaining who amongst his parishioners are unable to read should never be omitted; that this preliminary step may be followed by appropriate measures to enable and persuade all under his pastoral care to avail themselves of such a benefit as religious education.\*

\* See in Appendix, No. III. a simple method of facilitating the instruction of the adult poor.

## CHAPTER II.

OBERLIN BECOMES M. STUBER'S SUCCESSOR AT BAN DE LA ROCHE—HIS METHOD OF PREACHING AND CATECHISING — ESTABLISHES SCHOOLS, SCHOOL-LIBRARIES, AND INFANT-SCHOOLS.

DREARY and secluded as was the situation of Ban de la Roche, the benevolence of Oberlin induced him to become Stuber's willing successor. In the following year he married a young lady of Strasbourg,\* an orphan, Madeleine Salome Witter, who cheerfully entered into her husband's plans of beneficence—plans in the prosecution of which he had to encounter those prejudices, usually attendant on ignorance, which lead the ill informed to imagine that old practices are always safe, and that whatever has the appearance of innovation must be per-

\* See Appendix, No. IV.

nicious. By prudence and kindness, however, these prejudices were gradually dispelled. But before I explain the nature of those plans, which, as a friend to the temporal prosperity of his poor and wretched parishioners, he adopted, it will be well to look at him in the character of a religious pastor.

He preached in each of his churches in its turn, the people of Waldbach following him when he officiated in one of the other villages. His sermons were adapted to the comprehension of the peasantry; and he often wisely blended illustrations from natural objects, and anecdotes from the lives of eminent Christians, with his instructions, and was thus able to gain and fix the attention of the people. From the Bible, above all, he cited largely upon every subject he brought into the pulpit. When not able to write his sermons at full length, he drew up large schemes. He usually repeated his discourses from memory, like most foreign Clergymen, Roman Catholic and Protestant; but sometimes took up a

subject less studied, when circumstances seemed to render it more suitable.

On the Sunday afternoon he catechised youth, and his instructions were then still plainer than in the morning. It is the judicious method of many foreign Protestants, and was that of Oberlin, not merely to ask children questions in the Catechism,\* but to make each subject the basis for valuable explanations, remarks, and exhortations; a method exceedingly desirable, even in so short a Catechism as that of the Church of England, and by which there would be the advantage of not only making difficult words and subjects intelligible, but of awakening the consciences and affections of young persons, and persuading them not to rest satisfied with committing the answers of the Catechism to memory, but, by divine grace, to become truly religious in heart and life.

\* Since this account of Oberlin was penned, I have read with pleasure the Rev. Mr. Gilly's "*Horæ Catecheticae*," where the duty of catechising is strongly and ably advocated, and various useful suggestions are introduced.

It cannot but be deeply regretted, that in consequence of the little care taken, in many parishes, properly to explain and enforce the doctrines and duties contained in the Catechism, and the solemn nature of baptismal engagements, the renewal of vows at the rite of Confirmation is an affair of little seriousness with many young persons, neglected by some altogether, attended by others after slight preparation, and, when distance from the place of Confirmation renders a longer or shorter journey necessary from the villages, is frequently more injurious than beneficial—evils of serious magnitude, and not to be disregarded. Doubtless the remedies may, when diligently sought, be found with little difficulty; and amongst these, judicious zeal in communicating catechetical instruction will ever hold a prominent place.

Every Friday, M. Oberlin had service in the German language, for those persons in his villages who were little acquainted with French; a practice to which something similar (but on the Sunday rather than



any other day) seems much wanted in those parts of Ireland where the natives still usually converse in the Irish language.

As a farther proof of his paternal regard for his parishioners, I may add, that he sent circular and minute questions to all of them, relative to their attending at church, observing the Lord's-day, sending children to school, paying their debts, practising industrious and economical habits, &c. &c. All this he did for the purpose of exciting their attention to what he deemed requisite both for their religious and worldly prosperity.

For his own guidance, and more perfect acquaintance with the state of his populous parish, he had even formed a sort of moral register, in which he had inscribed, by private marks, the names of his parishioners under various heads, as drunkards, bad managers, idlers, &c. &c. Although many Clergymen might prefer laying up such a moral register in the memory, rather than putting it into the form of a book, there



is another kind of register which seems to be highly requisite, namely, one containing the names of the boys and girls in the schools, with separate columns for the name, the day and year when baptized, the time of admission into the school, the time of leaving it, when confirmed, trade or occupation, whether a communicant, where resident, if removed from the parish. If such registers were commonly adopted, and were Clergymen and Sunday School Teachers to inquire, with affectionate solicitude, about those educated in their schools, after they have embarked in the world, or entered into service, numbers might be preserved from present and eternal ruin, who are now lost to their friends, to society, and the Christian church, partly because no connecting links were kept up between them and their spiritual pastors or teachers, from the moment that, at the most critical period of life, they left the parish and the Sunday-school for untried situations in an ensnaring world.

The attention of M. Stuber to the in-

struction of the ignorant has been already described: that of his successor is also well worthy of notice. Notwithstanding the objections of some parishioners, who were unwilling to lay out money in building a school-house in each of the five villages, they at length acceded to M. Oberlin's wish, from a conviction of the benefits that would accrue, after he had, partly from his own moderate income, and partly from the kindness of friends at Strasbourg, built one school-room without any expense to his parishioners. All in these schools were above the age of seven, and were taught reading, writing, arithmetic, and the elements of geography, agriculture, astronomy, and sacred and profane history. The principles of religion the pastor reserved to himself to teach.

That the children might be excited to diligence, they were required to meet from all the villages, once a week, at Waldbach, where progress was ascertained by an examination and comparison, which must naturally have excited diligence, previously, amongst the

scholars. The elder children often had passages relative to husbandry to copy. There was also established a lending-library; and books, after being kept for use three months at one school were sent to another. Oberlin went even farther than some ministers might deem expedient, for the instruction of youth as well as their parents; for, besides a collection of indigenous plants, the properties and uses of which were of course explained, he even procured books on natural history, and an electrical machine, in order to enlarge the minds of his people with respect to the wonders of nature and art. He also published an Almanack, divested of superstitious and silly remarks, that the people might not be deluded by the falsehoods of pretending astrologers.

Whilst the care of youth thus engaged, even that of infants did not escape the vigilant and benevolent mind of Oberlin: and it appears that the peculiar attention to children from two to six or seven years of age, in rooms called "Salles d'Asile" at Paris, and in "Infant Schools" in England,

must be traced up to Oberlin's parish as their source and first model. He was fearful lest the little children should be exposed to danger, or should contract early habits of idleness and vice, when their parents were engaged in husbandry, or at a trade; he was therefore induced to hire rooms, in which the children might amuse themselves, and be instructed, under the control of mild and affectionate women, as *Conductrices*, and whose task consisted in requiring them to speak French, instead of the vulgar Patois; in teaching the elder ones to sew, spin, knit, and sing; in explaining geographical cards, and prints of natural and of sacred history; and preventing harm or mischief during the play-hours.\*

I may be permitted to observe, in this place, that if the plan of introducing English, instead of Irish, Welsh, and Gaelic, were practised in similar schools—that is Infant Schools, before the children have practised those dialects—not only would the result

\* See a farther notice in Appendix, No. V.

be advantageous to children in Ireland, Wales, and the Highlands, in the common affairs of life, but be favourable to the promotion of the Protestant religion, as taught in the Established Church; and not only so, it would have a tendency to strengthen the foundations of the British Empire; for diversity of language helps to perpetuate ancient feuds, dissensions, prejudices; but by means of unity of language, the subjects of one realm become more fully sensible that they are one people, not separate tribes; they feel that they have one common interest, because they possess and value common privileges; and speaking the same language, they gradually imbibe the same general ideas. The same remarks appear to me to apply to all the foreign dependencies and colonies of the empire, in which it would seem to be very wise policy to render the English language as prevalent as possible. It may secure foreign possessions longer than the power of the sword can do so, and reconcile those who learn it to British sway.



I may add, that when it is the object to teach English to children who have for some years practised speaking another language—their mother tongue—the most effectual way to introduce the former amongst a population, and gradually supplant the latter, is to teach both languages in precisely the same books and lessons; first teaching children to read their provincial language—Irish, for example, or Welsh—and then instructing them in English, in parallel passages. Experience corroborates the remark, for it has shewn that attempts to teach the Wendens, already alluded to, German, were unsuccessful till the people had first learned to read the Wendish tongue; whilst they afterwards felt desirous to enlarge their knowledge by learning German. The example of Wales has, in like manner, shewn that the knowledge of English has become far more prevalent since the establishment of Sunday-schools for teaching Welsh; those who had learned the latter language thirsting for an acquaintance with the English also, and having acquired the habit of application to books.



The facts are of the highest importance in reference to promoting civilization and religion in Ireland, where, on the very low calculation adopted by the Commissioners on Education in their First Report laid before Parliament, one million and a half usually speak Irish; and to whom it is expedient,—as Archbishop Daniell, and Bishop Bedell, and their associates, who translated the Scriptures and Common Prayer Book into Irish well understood,—that instruction should be imparted, in the first place, through the medium of their native tongue,\*

But to return to M. Oberlin's parish. Whilst the Ban de la Roche presented a spot on the surface of France, favoured in a peculiar degree with the benefits of education, that large kingdom, generally speaking, has not risen to so high a

\* These, and other points, are discussed in an ample and luminous manner, in a work, entitled "Historical Sketches of the Ancient Irish," by Christopher Anderson; a work highly deserving of the perusal of all engaged in benefiting Ireland, especially the Clergy of that country.

standard in respect to the education of the poor, as might be hoped, and even expected, in so highly civilized a country. This will appear by the following table.

	Population.	Communes without Schools.	Communes with Schools.	Number of Scholars.
Northern Departments	13,663,914	4,401	15,701	740,846
Southern Departments	17,936,086	9,668	8,669	375,931
	31,600,000	14,069	24,370	1,116,777

From the above statement, it appears that above fourteen thousand communes, or villages, are still unprovided with schools for the poor, and that only one in twenty-eight of the population is under a course of instruction. It also appears that education is in a much more flourishing state in the North than in the South of France. In connexion with this point, I may subjoin, that the Northern Departments excel the Southern in agriculture and commerce, and yield a larger revenue to the Crown, whilst the proportion of crimes is much greater in the South of France. Education is, apparently, both a cause and effect of the

greater prosperity of the North. Happy will it be for many desolate districts of that large and interesting country, if the achievements of Oberlin, in his secluded sphere, which have now become a matter of great publicity, should gradually induce many other persons, in the several provinces, to imitate his laborious zeal and unwearied benevolence, more especially in his attention to the education of children.

## CHAPTER III.

IMPROVEMENT OF THE PARISH ROADS AT BAN DE  
LA ROCHE—IMPROVEMENTS IN AGRICULTURE—  
INTRODUCTION OF MANUFACTURES — PLANS OF  
DOMESTIC ECONOMY.

THERE was a feature in M. Oberlin's philanthropic efforts peculiarly characteristic ; I mean that regard to the temporal prosperity of his poor parishioners, which he displayed with so much ingenuity and perseverance, by improvements in rural affairs, the introduction of manufactures, and plans of domestic economy. Each of these three classes will require explanation.

He perceived that one of the urgent wants of the parish was that of good roads, without which no communication with the main road, and with neighbouring towns, could be kept up for more than six months

in the year. The people being thus deprived of many advantages, he tried to persuade them to form a road for half a league, and build a bridge; a proposal to which they were averse till he pointed out to them that they would be amply repaid by taking their produce to market, and bringing back other articles. Under his superintendence the work was so effectually carried on that a communication was opened with Strasbourg at all seasons of the year. They afterwards, under his direction, improved the roads from one village to another; raised walls to prevent the good soil on the declivities from being washed away by rains; turned the streams that were carrying off that soil into proper channels; and built convenient cottages instead of their former wretched cabins.

Another principal improvement he introduced was that in the system of agriculture,—often a difficult task, and requiring much patience and perseverance, on account of the prejudices common amongst country people. Well knowing this, Oberlin resolved to

appeal to their eyes instead of their ears; and having two gardens in which there were paths through which the parishioners were accustomed to pass, he brought them, with the help of an intelligent servant, into so high a state of cultivation, that the people, wondering at the contrast between their pastor's ground and crops and their own, anxiously inquired the reason. Oberlin, after first directing their thoughts to the God of seasons and Giver of all good, cheerfully explained to them those agricultural processes by which they might hope to obtain similar success. Such, for a long time, has been the result of his instructions, that those travellers who visit the Steinthal must be delighted, as I was, to see even the hill behind Waldbach decked with various crops, beautiful in appearance as well as beneficial to the proprietors. It will be desirable, however, to illustrate, by some details, the nature of the improvements.

So barbarous was the state of cultivation, that, previously to the year 1709, the people lived chiefly on wild pears and



apples. The famine of that year induced them to think of clearing the forest and planting potatoes. The potatoes at length degenerated in quality, and became unproductive. Fields that once yielded from 120 to 150 bushels, produced only 30 or 40; and thus, whilst the population were increasing, the means of sustaining that population were rapidly decreasing. Whilst the people supposed that the ground was unfavourable to that root, M. Oberlin's more correct knowledge of the principles of agriculture enabled him to meet the evil by obtaining different sorts of potatoes for planting from Germany, Switzerland, and Lorraine. Such excellent potatoes were in consequence produced as to be much sought for at Strasbourg market. The people were also instructed to use a smaller number of potatoes in planting, by cutting each into several pieces, every piece containing what is called an eye. It is generally thought, that without the above improvements, the inhabitants would have been reduced to dreadful extremity in those years of dearth, 1812, 1816, and 1817.

As this Memoir of the venerable Pastor of Waldbach may be read by some who possess, or whose friends possess, landed property in Ireland, I should deem it wrong to pass on without offering a few suggestions; and which I may feel, perhaps, the more justified in offering, when I state, that I have personally witnessed the deplorably careless, and even injudicious manner in which the cultivation of the ground is often carried on in that country.

That the potatoe is the chief article of subsistence in Ireland is a serious evil, since, the labour of a few days or weeks being sufficient to obtain the quantity requisite for the support of a family, this simple circumstance fosters that indolence which is the source of many other bad habits, and, by encouraging early and indiscreet marriages, produces a too rapid increase of population. The gradual substitution of other food, to acquire which shall demand more time and industry from the peasantry, appears therefore to be highly desirable. Whilst the potatoe does continue to be the

principal food of the inhabitants, however; it should be a wholesome not a degenerate root, otherwise low fever, and other complaints, must be occasionally prevalent. To guard against the degeneracy of that root, a fresh importation of potatoes of a good sort from England, Scotland, or the different soil of another county, should be obtained from time to time. Masters of vessels may not always find the price given a sufficient inducement to bring cargoes to Irish ports on speculation. The peasantry in the interior may also neglect to go to a considerable distance to procure potatoes for planting. For these reasons, the agents of landed proprietors may be well induced to assist in getting such supplies from distant parts occasionally. Landed Proprietors and Clergymen cannot be made too sensible, however, that whilst the culture of the potatoe in undue proportion will lead to a redundancy of population, for a reason already assigned, the potatoe is a root that materially exhausts the soil, and consequently lessens its power to support the population, except under a more judicious system of alternate crops

than the careless mode of Irish farming usually exhibits. I Indeed I may be allowed, perhaps, to add, that the prosperity of Ireland would be much advanced if the introduction of a taste and wish for better food, better clothing, and better cottages, should induce her inhabitants to postpone marriage to a proper period of life ; if the institution of Savings' Banks, in different districts, should dispose them to lay by money for use when they marry at such suitable age ; and if those correct religious principles should become more prevalent, which are essential as a preservative from immorality before, and a directory of conduct after marriage. But though I could not well forbear inserting the above remarks, on points which I think materially affect the welfare of the Sister Country, it is time to return to Pastor Oberlin, whose improvements in these and other matters present an instructive pattern for proprietors, clergymen, and other influential inhabitants of Ireland.

Finding the Ban de la Roche deficient in

many valuable trees and plants, Oberlin obtained different sorts of fruit-trees, profitable grasses, and vegetables which were unknown in that neighbourhood. Flax, for instance, became an object of cultivation, and, for that purpose, he procured seed from Riga. It succeeded well; as did clover in some places; and these three crops—clover, flax, and potatoes—were found well adapted to the granitic sand of the Steinthal. By his advice the people were more careful in saving manure for the land; they formed artificial water-meadows; and even ploughed in green crops to improve the soil for crops of greater value. They were also taught the properties of wild indigenous plants, serviceable for health, food, and the useful arts; the advantages attending feeding cows in the stable and farm yard with grasses and vegetables cut for them, instead of permitting them to tread great part of the grass in fields whilst eating the rest; and the imprudence of letting cattle graze on bad pastures, which might be more profitably converted into arable land. In process of time, nurseries having been formed, and the

art of grafting introduced, a small Agricultural Society was instituted in connexion with that of Strasbourg, which, in 1805, voted 200 francs, to be divided amongst those peasants of the Steinthal, who excelled in planting nursery-grounds and grafting fruit-trees. Oberlin himself offered a prize in order to improve the breed of cattle, and devoted two hours of Thursday morning, once a fortnight, to giving young men instructions useful to them, both as Agriculturists and as Christians. Thus attending to the temporal interests of his parishioners, as a patriotic philanthropist, he so gained their confidence and esteem as to be able the more effectually to secure their attention to his instructions as their minister.

So steadily, yet so rapidly, did civilization advance at the Ban de la Roche, under the superintendence of this indefatigable benefactor, that his friends at Paris and Strasbourg deemed it proper to collect documents on the subject, and submit them, without his knowledge, in the year 1818,



to the Central Agricultural Society at Paris. On hearing the statement of the Count de Neuf-château, who had actually seen the improvements in question, the Society presented M. Oberlin with a Gold Medal. The Count states, in his "*Mémoires de la Société Royale et Centrale d'Agriculture*," that there are waste lands still in France upon which 5,000 new villages may be established, and adds, that whenever such Home-Colonies shall become desirable, Waldbach should be regarded as one of the best models, since amongst the 30,000 or 40,000 villages already existing in that country, there is not one where social economy, under its various aspects, has been brought to so high a point of perfection.\* I feel induced to add, that

\* The expediency of such Home-Colonies on those waste lands of Ireland which might be transformed by draining from a state of bog into good land, has occurred to many persons. The canals formed by such a well directed process of draining, would also facilitate internal commerce. In Sir John Sinclair's "*Code of Agriculture*" the immense quantity of land that remains still unimproved in Ireland is stated from documents, and the proper process of cultivation carefully pointed out. M.

if Oberlin's parish had possessed an advantage which many in France, Ireland, Wales, and other countries do, that of being on the sea-coast, it would probably have exhibited proofs of his activity and beneficence, in the adoption of sea-weed as an excellent manure, and the cultivation of those profitable plants to which it is favourable; in the establishment of a well-conducted fishery, that the riches of the sea might not, as in many places, be almost wholly lost; and, perhaps, even in some judicious attempt to render it, on a greater or smaller scale, a place of commerce. I shall be forgiven this observation, when it is recollected how often, for want of thought, local advantages are little appreciated, perhaps wholly neglected.

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Oberlin's improvements coincide with the principles of Sir John Sinclair's "Code." Those, whether in Great Britain or Ireland, who are studious of the temporal happiness of the poor in the country, may consult, with advantage, the experiments and calculations detailed in a small pamphlet by Mr. Wm. Allen, of the Society of Friends. In the Netherlands Home-Colonies have been formed, to which the beggars have been transferred.

The introduction of manufactures was one of Oberlin's favourite objects. The population, at first scanty, having at length reached the number of 3,000 souls, became too numerous for agricultural employment. Deducting from that number 1,000 young and aged persons, there remained still 2,000 able to work, whilst 500 were as many as the cultivation of the ground required. What were the 1,500 to do ? In addition to straw-platting, knitting, and dyeing, by means of plants, M. Oberlin introduced cotton-spinning, and gave prizes to those women who were the best spinners. This branch of industry succeeded so well, that it once produced, in a single year, the sum of 32,000 francs. In the year 1814, M. Legrand, of Bâsle, attracted to the neighbourhood by M. Oberlin's well-earned reputation, persuaded his two sons to remove from the Department of the Upper Rhine, and establish their silk-ribbon manufactory in his parish. They did so at the village of Foudai. By means of such seasonable occupation, many hands have been employed ; and it has been the practice of this respectable family

to allow the children to work at the ribbon-looms in different houses, under the eye of their parents, instead of being exposed to the influence of bad example, when, as in some manufactories, withdrawn from that salutary check.

Anxious to render his parish independent of other places, the wise pastor of Waldbach clothed some clever boys, and sent them as apprentices to Strasbourg, that they might learn to be masons, blacksmiths, joiners, glaziers, and cartwrights. The consequence was, that money, instead of being spent in other places for work done as formerly, remained in the parish; which was a matter of consequence, where poverty had been once very general.

This was not the case at an after-period, for by attention to Domestic Economy, in its various branches, which M. Oberlin endeavoured constantly to inculcate, the people were better able both to gain and to lay by money. As some of the people had incurred small debts of which payments

might, to their great inconvenience, be demanded at any time, he persuaded them to form a society apart, for the purpose of putting a small but stated sum into a fund, by means of which they might gradually pay off those debts. Agricultural implements being very scarce, a shop was opened for selling them at cost price, and credit given till after harvest. A lending fund was also established, to which those who borrowed were compelled to return the money advanced as a loan at a prescribed time, otherwise they were not entitled to borrow again for a limited period. It would have been still better, of course, if they had, instead of borrowing, been able to take out money from a fund, constituted of their own savings, as may be done by those who put money into Savings' Banks in England; and I cannot forbear to add, that, probably, under a well arranged parochial system, comprising (1.) full wages for the labourer, instead of part-payment from the poor's-rate; (2.) a Friendly Society, to which the contributions shall be made, and from which money shall be derived in case

of sickness, or old age, according to approved tables of calculation;\* (3.) a Savings' Bank; (4.) a fund for the liquidation of small debts already contracted; and (5.) such an exemplification of Christian charity, as will be noticed presently towards orphans; that fruitful source of evils to England—the poor's rate—injurious alike to the prosperity of landlords, tenants, and tradesmen, and to the morals of the poor, might be abolished by degrees in many parishes, if not in all.† Perhaps, also, the necessity of establishing that rate in Ireland might be obviated by the same means.

\* The "Hampshire Friendly Society" has published such approved Tables, on the principles contended for in the Rev. Mr. Beecher's Pamphlet on Friendly Societies.

† Clergymen, and others, who wish to ascertain the possibility of diminishing or even abolishing the poor's rate in their respective spheres, will naturally study the pages of that patriotic and philanthropic, as well as eloquent writer, Dr. Chalmers, in his "Christian and Civic Economy."



## CHAPTER IV.

FEMALE PAROCHIAL ASSISTANTS—OBERLIN'S CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.

IT becomes now my pleasing task to state the efficient aid which M. Oberlin received from some persons of a benevolent disposition in his parish; not only from the family of Legrand, already mentioned, of whom the father kindly devoted time to the inspection of schools, but even from females, and those in very humble stations of life. Notwithstanding the pious affectionate preaching, and practical efforts of the Pastor of Waldbach, the levity and worldly-mindedness of numbers of his parishioners continued to create anguish in his mind; but others, happily, afforded full proof that they had imbibed a portion of their Pastor's benevolence; for when parents died, their

friends and neighbours kindly took charge of their orphan children; the young people also cheerfully assisted the aged and sick in their field-work, and, if a cottage was to be built, fetched the materials. Again, if a poor man's cow died, the people combined to help him to buy another. One young person even refused to enter the marriage-state, that she might dedicate her time and strength, and the surplus of her gains, after a moderate allowance for herself, to the relief of the necessitous, and the support of religious institutions, such as the Bible Society, and that for Missions. An account of other female fellow-helpers, cannot be better given than in the form of an extract from a letter, written by M. Oberlin, Nov. 3, 1804, to acknowledge the receipt of £30. sent from the British and Foreign Bible Society to purchase Bibles. "Among the large number of individuals and families to whom a Bible is a most welcome gift, I first put down such characters as are most active in promoting the Redeemer's kingdom, and doing good to the bodies and souls of their fellow-creatures.

1. The *first* Bible shall be given as a present to Sophia Bernard, who is one of the most excellent women I know, and, indeed, an ornament to my parish. While unmarried, she undertook, with the consent of her parents, the support and education of three helpless boys, whom their inhuman father had often trampled under his feet, and treated in a manner too shocking to relate, when, nearly starving with hunger, they ventured to cry out for food. Soon afterwards she proved the happy means of saving the lives of three Roman Catholic children, who, without her assistance, would have fallen a prey to want and famine. Thus she had the management of six children, to whom several more were added, belonging to parents of three several denominations. She then hired a house and a servant girl, and supported the whole of the family entirely by her own work, and the little money acquired by the industry of the children, whom she taught to spin cotton. At the same time she proved the greatest blessing to the whole village where she

lived;\* for it is impossible for any one to be more industrious, frugal, clean, cheerful, and edifying by her whole conduct; more ready for every good word and work; more mild and affectionate, and more firm and resolute in dangers than she was. . . . A fine youth, of generous disposition, made her an offer of marriage, and, as she appeared unwilling to accept him, declared that he would wait ten years, if necessary, to gain her hand. She then acknowledged that her motive for refusing him was the grief it would occasion her to part from her little orphans. 'He who takes the mother, takes the children also,' replied the young man. On this condition the marriage took place, and all the children were brought up under their mutual care in the most excellent manner. They have lately taken in some other orphans, whom they are training up in the fear and love of God. Though these excellent people pass for rather rich, yet their income is so limited, and their benevolence

\* Foudai.

so extensive, that they sometimes hardly know how to furnish themselves with a new suit of necessary clothes. I intend to give *them* a Bible, because their own is very often lent out in different Roman Catholic villages.

“ 2. A *second* Bible I intend to give to an excellent woman, named Maria Schepler, who lives at the opposite end of my extensive parish, where the cold is more severe, and the ground unfruitful, so that nearly all the householders are poor people. . . . Though distressed and afflicted in her own person and circumstances, yet she is a mother, benefactress, and teacher to the whole village in which she lives, and to some neighbouring districts too . . . . She also has brought up several orphans, without receiving the smallest recompence ; keeps a free school for females, and makes it a practice to lend her Bible to such as do not possess one.\*

\* M. Oberlin afterwards had Bibles for the purpose of lending to Roman Catholics, from whom some priests would have taken them away, if they had been the owners. In some cases this practice may succeed in Ireland.

“ 3. A *third* Bible I intend to present to an excellent widow, Catherine Scheidecker, who is, like the former, a mother to orphans, and keeps a free-school; so also does another young woman, who instructs little children in a neighbouring village in such knowledge as may render them useful members of society.”\*

It is worthy of particular notice that the active benevolence of ladies in England, and still more recently in France, and other countries, in promoting the interests of the Bible Society and Missionary Societies, by Auxiliary Associations, and personal communication with the poor, appears, like some majestic river traced to a small rivulet in the mountains as its source, to have derived its origin from the humble efforts of these women in the Ban de la Roche; for when the late Rev. Mr. Owen, Secretary to the British and Foreign Bible Society, visited

\* Her name was Catherine Banzet. She, from kindness, attended to teach in all the knitting-schools.



M. Oberlin's parish, in the autumn of 1818, he had an interview with Sophia Bernard and Catherine Scheidecker, which he describes by writing, "Maria Schepler, the second on the list of this memorable trio, had, I found, been removed to her rest: the two . . . who now stood before me, remained to fill up the measure of their usefulness in the work of their Lord. Never shall I forget the manner in which these interesting peasants received me, when, addressing them by name, I told them that I had known them nearly fourteen years, and that the account of their services, communicated to us by the pastor whom they so greatly assisted, had been instrumental in stirring up the zeal of many to labour after their example. 'Oh, Sir,' said Sophia Bernard, the tears filling her eyes at the time, 'this does indeed humble us,' adding many remarks in relation to their obscurity, the imperfection of their works, and the honour they considered it to labour for Him who had done so much, yea, every thing, for them." I had the satisfaction of seeing Catherine Scheidecker, at Foudai, in the

year 1823. She left this world for a better in 1826. Sophia Bernard had died some time before our arrival. It was delightful even to look at the house pointed out as that in which she had resided, and unostentatiously exercised such genuine benevolence.

It is evident, upon a careful examination of St. Paul's Epistles, and especially the 16th chapter to the Romans, that not only many laymen, but females also, assisted him and other preachers in the apostolic age, by religious exertions adapted to their age, sex, and circumstances. The necessity of such co-operation must forcibly present itself to the minds of many Clergymen entrusted with large parishes in the present day, when the population often far exceeds the number that a Rector and Curate can attend to, and the church accommodate; and when an increase of schools, charitable associations, and domiciliary visits is urgently called for, unless the benefiting the mass of the lower orders be resigned, through culpable remissness or unmanly despon-

dency, to the pious efforts of dissenting ministers and their lay co-adjutors. That principle which is universally recognized as promotive of success in a manufactory—the division of labour—appears to be essential also in the management of a large parish; and unless many heads, eyes, hands, and feet, be employed, besides his own, as those of the superior and superintendent, the Rector will achieve but little, compared with what ought to be accomplished, under the fearful responsibility attached to his office and station.

Before I quit the subject of M. Oberlin's female parochial assistants, some notice is due to the excellent woman, Louisa Schepler, who resided 50 years in his house, and to whose friendly attentions other travellers, as well as myself, have been indebted. She had been received an orphan into his house in her 15th year. On the death of his wife, in 1784, she undertook the management of the house, and the care of his children, but would never accept a pecuniary remuneration. Her own little property she devoted

to charitable purposes, and her plain wardrobe. After M. Oberlin's death, a letter was found addressed to his children, and commending this faithful Louisa, who had been their nurse and their instructress, to their attention till her death. The venerable pastor informs them, that in former years, after having instructed children in different villages in religion, and taught them to sing hymns, she has, upon her return over bad roads, in inclement weather, though exhausted, wet, or chilled with cold, attended to them, when young children, and to household affairs. Fully sensible how much they owed to such a friend, M. Oberlin's children, upon his death, proposed to Louisa to give her an equal share of their father's little property; but this she refused, and only requested that she might remain an inmate in the family, and be allowed to add the honoured name of Oberlin to her own. She is still at Waldbach, in the house of Mr. Rauscher, the present minister, who married a daughter of M. Oberlin.

## CHAPTER V.

OBERLIN'S EXTRA-PAROCHIAL EXERTIONS — HE  
AIDS MISSIONARY ATTEMPTS — PROMOTES THE  
DISTRIBUTION OF THE SCRIPTURES IN FRANCE.

HAVING thus seen what that venerable man's plans and arrangements were within the sphere of his parish, we may now proceed to examine the nature and extent of his extra-parochial connexions and efforts. His intercourse with *individuals*, in person or by letter, was considerable for a man so secluded from the world. For many years past that celebrity as a philanthropic pastor, which he acquired but did not seek, brought many travellers to his beloved Steinthal. Some respected clergymen whom I have the happiness to know, were of that number; the Rev. Dr. Steinkopff, and the Rev. Francis Cunningham. The late Rev. Mr.

Owen has been already mentioned. I met a young minister from Berlin also, who travelled for the purpose of religious research, I believe at the expense and under the auspices of his Sovereign. The late Count de Lézay-Marnésia, Prefect of the Lower Rhine, often consulted him when sceptical objections to revealed religion arose in his mind, and was as pleased to yield as Oberlin was to obtain the victory in argument. His correspondence as well as conversation contributed likewise to the extension of his usefulness, for which that combination of originality and piety which he possessed seems to have eminently fitted him. When anxious to console a lady who had been much afflicted, he ingeniously began his letter by saying, "that he saw two stones intended to imitate the precious stones ; both alike as to colour, and equally transparent, yet materially differing in brilliancy. What was the reason? The reason was this, that the one was cut so as to present only a few sides, (facettes,) whilst the other contained ten times as many. These sides were formed by a very violent operation in the art of cutting and polishing



them. Had each of them been endued with life, that which had most endured the effects of the cutting and polishing instruments would, no doubt, have envied the lot of that which had suffered only a tenth part of the same operation. But when that was once over, the actual difference between the two appeared conspicuous. The one quite eclipsed the other. And does not this well illustrate the words of our Saviour, ‘Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted?’—blessed, if considered in themselves and apart; blessed, if compared with those who have not undergone so many trials.” Happy were those Christians in past days, who, under the severe pressure of affliction, had the benefit of epistolary communication from such experienced guides as a Bradford, a Leighton, and, in later times, a Newton of Olney; and really, though not equally favoured, were those who received lines of consolation from a Fenelon in the Roman Catholic, an Oberlin in the Lutheran Church!

His connexion with Foreign Societies

forms another very prominent feature in M. Oberlin's life. The condition of the Negro Slaves deeply affected his mind ; so much so, that he and his wife agreed to sell their plate, and send the proceeds towards supporting missionaries who had gone to instruct them in Christian principles. Deeming it right (an opinion which many humane persons may be disposed to controvert) to abstain from the use of coffee and sugar raised by the labour of slaves, he exercised self-denial in this respect, although before accustomed to the use of both articles.

From the first year of the establishment of the British and Foreign Bible Society, a correspondence was opened with Pastor Oberlin, and a small Committee, consisting of himself, his son Henry, and M. Daniel Legrand, was formed at Waldbach, which became the central point for disseminating the Scriptures through France. More than 10,000 Bibles and New Testaments were circulated in that country through this channel, before the Paris Bible Society was formed. During a journey in the South

of France, in 1815, for the purpose of promoting the interests of that Society, his excellent son Henry caught a severe cold from rendering assistance in extinguishing a fire in some town, and, returning to the Steintal, died of consumption, amidst the regrets of his friends and neighbours.

It is a practice at the Ban de la Roche to meet on a particular evening, and, after reading part of the Scriptures, to pray for God's blessing on the parish, and on all religious institutions. A collection is afterwards made, according to the means and disposition of each person,\* and put into a box, to be sent to the Treasurers of the Bible and Missionary Societies. It appears to me, I confess, that such a mode of collecting offerings is to be preferred to soliciting penny-a-week subscriptions from persons in the humbler classes, who might derive religious benefit themselves were they to meet occasionally for intercession, and

\* Oberlin instructed and exhorted his parishioners to put by weekly a sum for charitable purposes.

whose gifts would be bestowed with less reluctance when offered spontaneously, and, though discreetly, in the glow of benevolent affection. Where the poor have been invited, and induced to present such offerings, the pleasing result has often been that piety, morality, economy, and contentment have followed; and whether the Clergyman and his parishioners prefer supporting the "Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge," or the "British and Foreign Bible Society," or both;—the "Society for the Propagation of the Gospel," or the "Church Missionary Society," or the "Prayer Book and Homily Society," and other benevolent institutions, it is, evidently, in exact unison with the spirit of Christianity, and with the tenor of the Church of England Liturgy, that such plans of beneficence should be supported, and intercessory prayers, of which there are many suitable in our formularies,\* offered up for their success.

\* "The Prayer for all conditions of Men," the Third Collect for Good Friday, the 67th Psalm, the "Prayer for Christ's Church militant on Earth," and others.

## CHAPTER VI.

OBERLIN'S LOVE OF PEACE—ECCENTRICITIES—  
HUMANITY—PIETY.

THE great leading traits in Oberlin—humble piety and ingenious active benevolence—have been sufficiently conspicuous in the foregoing pages; but it will not be uninteresting to bring forward to view some of those lesser lines, those peculiarities of mind and heart which combined to constitute the originality which he so evidently possessed. Amongst these may be mentioned his love of peace.

There had been a dispute between the lords of the manor and the peasantry, respecting certain rights connected with the forests, which had lasted above 80 years.

The worthy Prefect of the department of the Lower Rhine, M. de Lézay-Marnésia, anxious to put an end to it, intreated M. Oberlin to use his influence for that purpose. He did so, both by noticing occasionally in conversation the evils resulting from protracted law-suits, and by inculcating from the pulpit that charity which "suffereth long," and "seeketh not her own." The minds of his parishioners being at length prepared for the desirable arrangement, an agreement was signed, and the pen used was presented to him as a small trophy of the triumph.

Another instance of his love of peace occurred when one of his parishioners was about to be way-laid by neighbours, for taking a female child, daughter of his wife, who was a Roman Catholic, to be baptized by a Roman Catholic priest. M. Oberlin, by his presence and persuasion, protected the man and woman from the act of violence designed against them. To a poor Jew, who had come to sell articles, he shewed similar kindness ; for when he heard the menaces



and loud reproaches which some of his parishioners uttered against the stranger, he blamed them for such unworthy conduct, and led the man by the hand into his own house for safety. Such feelings in the people were expressed, probably, before his admirable instructions raised them to the knowledge they afterwards attained.

Amidst the tumult of political storms, the love of peace prevailed in his breast, and even his parish was a place of shelter from their violence. Several refugees from Strasbourg, of different religious opinions, fled there at a crisis of alarm; and his compassion in receiving them subjected him to a public trial. The Court, however, not only acquitted him of the charge of wishing his parishioners to become partisans of Joseph II. but expressed regret that so useful a public character had been interrupted amidst his laborious avocations. Who can avoid expressing a wish that a similar pacific temper may become more prevalent amongst Christians of different religious persuasions in all countries, especially that agi-

tated country, Ireland? It is a temper perfectly compatible with earnestness in inculcating what they believe, upon examination, to be the vital truths of religion. No political differences should be permitted to dry up the stream of Christian charity; but, on the contrary, Christian charity should, in a great degree, diminish, and even destroy, the asperity attendant on political differences. Thus will the public tranquillity, domestic peace, private happiness, the honour of Christianity, and the extension of truth and piety be most effectually promoted.

Though M. Oberlin received with grateful delight the doctrine of the Atonement by a Saviour's meritorious death, yet solitude—often the nurse of ingenious but fanciful theories—the perusal of mystical works, a decay of mental vigour, and an excess of charity, appear to have led him to adopt a few eccentricities in opinion, which fidelity requires I should notice. He endeavoured, for instance, to represent, on a printed and partly coloured paper, what he sup-

posed to be the different degrees of happiness or misery which men shall enjoy or endure after the present life; and in illustrating this subject he referred to the temple of Solomon, the Valley of Hinnom, &c. as symbols. He very obligingly presented me with one of those printed papers; and I clearly perceived, from part of his conversation, that he supposed that souls in another state of existence, (in Purgatory, in fact,) might derive benefit from the prayers of survivors. Whilst an unscriptural excess of charity led to this erroneous opinion, it should be mentioned, that he kept a long list of persons, still living, for whom he wished, or was requested, to intercede in prayer. It struck me as a proof of eccentricity, as well as of the simplicity of his character, that texts of Scripture were affixed to the doors of apartments; thus fulfilling, in the very letter, the precept given to the Jews in Deut. vi. 9.

His friend Lavater's System of Physiognomy, and Gall's System of Phrenology, found an admirer in the Pastor of Waldbach;

who also felt inclined to judge of the character and dispositions of individuals by the preference they gave to one and another amidst a variety of shining stones of various colours. Numerous proofs, however, have been already given, that the ingenuity of Oberlin's mind was often directed to pursuits which, if not strictly of a spiritual nature, were of substantial benefit to his parishioners; and, in connexion with this point, I may mention, that he had a public fountain constructed; that he procured a large and a small fire-engine for general use; and that intent, like his Divine Master, on administering benefit to the bodies as well as souls of men, he gave medicines to the sick. The room in which I slept at his house had all the appearance of having been his dispensary; and there also I found a profile of his predecessor, M. Stuber. His considerate care induced him, afterwards, to send a young man to Strasbourg, to study medicine, and return to the Ban de la Roche; as well as females, who, on their return, might act as experienced midwives. But whether engaged in works of great or in-

ferior importance, of a spiritual or of a merely charitable kind, religious principle was the main-spring that actuated his ardent mind; for his two favourite maxims were, “Rien sans Dieu”—“Tout au Sauveur,” “Nothing without God”—“All to the Saviour.” Such was his dependence upon God, such his devotedness to the Redeemer, —doubtless amidst numerous imperfections, —during his long and active life.

## CHAPTER VII.

OBERLIN'S DEATH—AFFECTING FUNERAL—  
CONCLUDING REMARKS.

AFTER a laborious ministerial career of 59 years at Waldbach, the venerable Oberlin died there, on the 1st of June, 1826, at the age of 86. Death had been long the subject of his contemplation. Even in his act of self-dedication to God, in 1760, and renewed, 1770, affecting devotional and truly evangelical petitions occur on that subject. The death of his wife, in 1784, led his mind to still more solemn views of death, and increased his desire to depart and to be with Christ, exempt from the sorrows and defects under which he mourned; a desire which regard to the welfare of his children, and of the people com-



mitted to his charge, forbade him too fondly to indulge. His great weakness having compelled him to resign the pastoral functions to his son-in-law, M. Graff, M. Oberlin, unable to go out often, employed his time chiefly in exercises of devotion, and in writing on different subjects; and remarks on Cicero's Treatise "on Old Age" were among the last things he wrote. He was suddenly seized with rigours, on Sunday, the 28th May, 1826, and occasionally fell into a swoon, through weakness; but when he returned to himself he often exclaimed, "Lord Jesus, receive me shortly; yet thy will be done." On the 31st he was much weakened by convulsions; yet he testified continually by signs, and sometimes by words, his affection for his children, his friends, his faithful servant Louisa, and his parishioners. On that night he uttered many plaintive cries, yet, in the intervals of relief, affectionately pressed the hands of his children to his heart. At length, the power of speech having failed, and his limbs become very cold, he regained strength enough to take off his cap, join his hands,

and raise up his eyes to heaven. That last effort having been made, his eyes closed, and never afterwards opened, and in about five hours afterwards he breathed his last.

Seldom has a funeral-ceremony been so deeply interesting as that of M. Oberlin, which took place on the 5th of June. Numbers of persons wishing to have a last sight of so venerable a benefactor, a glass was so fixed in the coffin as to allow the body to be seen. The President of the Consistory placed the ecclesiastical robes upon it, the Vice-president placed the Bible, and the Mayor attached to the funeral pall the red ribbon—the decoration of the Legion of Honour—presented to him by Louis XVIII. for his beneficent exertions. The coffin was borne by the Mayors and Elders, the oldest inhabitant carrying a cross before it, which Louisa had given to be placed upon his grave. So great was the concourse, that the first who walked in the procession had arrived at the church of Foudai, before the last had quitted Waldbach, though a mile and a half apart. On approaching the village, a new

bell, given by M. Legrand, sounded for the first time. The coffin being taken into the church, the President of the Consistory of Barr read from the pulpit a paper, penned by M. Oberlin as far back as 1784, after his wife's death, at a time when he appears, probably under the pressure of melancholy thoughts, to have expected that his own decease was likely to take place shortly. This paper refers to a few incidents in his own life, to his beloved children, who he supposed would be left fatherless, and to his parish. The following passage, which occurs in it, exhibited to the mourning people the tender regard which their pastor had cherished towards them even forty-two years before his decease, and must no doubt have deeply affected their minds. "Nor will God forget or abandon thee, my dear parish! He has towards thee, as I have often said, thoughts of peace and mercy. All things shall go on well. Only cleave to him, and let him order every thing. O let my name be forgotten in the midst of thee, and let that of Jesus, whom I have proclaimed, be remembered! He is thy pastor; I am but his ser-

vant. He is that good Master, who, after having fitted and prepared me from my youth, sent me to thee that I might be of some use. He alone is wise, good, all-powerful, and merciful; I am but a poor, weak, miserable man. Oh! my friends, pray that you may all become his dear sheep. There is salvation in none other than Jesus Christ; and Jesus loves you, seeks after you, and is ready to receive you: go to him such as you are, with all your sins and infirmities; he alone can deliver you from them and heal you; he will sanctify and perfect you. Live unto him: as you die one after another may you die in him; and may I meet you, and accompany you with songs of triumph into the mansions of bliss, before the throne of the Lamb! Adieu, dear friends, adieu! I have loved you much, and the very severity which I have deemed it necessary to use on some occasions, had for its first and principal reason, an anxious solicitude to make you happy. May God reward you for your services, your benefits, and for the deference and submission you have shewn to his poor and unworthy servant; and may he forgive

those who have opposed me, and given me pain and trouble; doubtless they knew not what they did. Oh! my God, let thine eye watch over my dear parishioners, let thine ear be open to hear them, and thy hand stretched forth to protect them. Lord Jesus, thou hast entrusted to me, weak and sinful as I am, this parish; oh! suffer me to recommit it to thine hands; give it pastors after thine own heart, and never forsake it; over-rule all things for its weal; enlighten all the people, lead them, love them, bless them, and let young and old, superiors and private individuals, pastors and parishioners, meet in thy paradise. Amen, amen. O God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, likewise add amen!"

The affecting memorial, from which the above is an extract, having been read, the President also read the 1st, 2d, 3d, and 4th verses of the 103d Psalm, and the 14th verse of the 7th chapter of Revelation, which Oberlin had selected as texts for funeral discourses, and on which suitable remarks were made by the President, M. Jaegle, and



Vice-president M. Braunswald. A Barrister, M. Stoeber, then read some pathetic stanzas in German, and M. Bedel, of Schirmeck, a physician, pronounced a brief eulogy. The grave, to which the remains of the venerable Oberlin were then committed, lies under a weeping willow that had been planted over the grave of his son Henry.

At the close of this account of so affectionate a village pastor, I will add a few apposite remarks, which seem naturally to arise.

1.—A striking contrast may be traced between a late great usurper—Napoleon—and this his humble subject, the Pastor of the Ban de la Roche. The former, in his mad career of ambition, exhibited the character and acts of a destroyer, and, after extorting the applause of undiscerning millions, died, unlamented by the wise and good, on a distant rocky island in the ocean: the latter, on the contrary, after exemplifying, in his unambitious course, in a sequestered district, the graces of the Christian benefactor, died



surrounded by his family, regretted by his friends, revered by Christians in other kingdoms, and bequeathing the legacy of so bright an example to ministers of various Christian communions, that memoirs of his life, as an instructive model, already appear in different European languages. Respecting the desolating conqueror, we may ask, in the language of sacred writ, "Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms?" But of the benevolent pastor, Oberlin, it may be said, without exaggeration, "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace."

2.—It is one of the advantages resulting from the intercourse between England and the Continent, since the peace consequent upon the fall of Napoleon, that by an interchange of visits and communications, not only many beneficial plans relative to the diffusion of the Scriptures, the formation of schools, the publication of religious books, &c., have been adopted in France, after England's example; but, as in this instance of Oberlin, and various other instances, that valuable

hints may be derived from the exertions of foreigners for the perfecting our own institutions, and enlarging our individual efforts. And to those who, like myself, have seen the venerable subject of this memoir, or have communicated particulars of his life to the public, it cannot but be a pleasure to cherish the hope, that benefits may arise to our own country, and especially to the poor in our numerous villages.

It would, indeed, be a source of great satisfaction, if the perusal of such a memorial as that I have just penned, should induce some of the clergy who live in secluded districts, abounding in ignorance and poverty, and even others who occupy stations amidst populous city-parishes, to look around with an eye more intent on search after opportunities of usefulness within their prescribed districts. For it cannot be disguised, that both in towns and villages there are often evident proofs that the whole of the population have not been brought within the sphere of notice and instruction. Frequently, indeed, an immense

proportion of those who are nominally members of the Church of England, are without any closely-connecting tie with either their minister or church. The contemplation of such a life as that of Oberlin, may well stimulate clergymen to consider what untried methods may be yet adopted to lessen the sufferings, dispel the ignorance, and save the souls of those entrusted to them. And I hope that it will not be deemed presumptuous on my part to offer such an observation, on a point deeply momentous under various aspects.

3.—There is something beautifully comprehensive, I think, and well-regulated in the Christian benevolence of Oberlin. Oberlin did not restrict his kindness and compassion to his parish in the mountains, regardless of the spiritual wants of his countrymen in general, and of the heathen. Nor did he, on the other hand, whilst solicitous for the prosperity of Missionary Societies, established on behalf of the heathen, slacken his attention to the welfare of his own parish or family. His charity began at home, but did not end there:

his family and parish were its first objects; it extended afterwards to the state of France, comparatively unenlightened by the Scriptures; it passed the bounds of France to other lands: negroes under the yoke of slavery, and pagans under the influence of idolatrous superstitions, awakened his sympathies and obtained a share of his prayers and efforts. His benevolence was thus proved to be of a genuine stamp, solid in its texture, substantial in its results, and thoroughly imbued with the spirit of Christianity. In this point also what a pattern to other pastors!

4.—The combination of activity with the love of retirement and reflection, was also very conspicuous in pastor Oberlin. Without much time devoted to thought and devotional retirement, his activity would have greatly impaired the spirituality of his affections; and great as his labours were, they would have been less profitably directed, and less sanctioned with the divine blessing. Whilst, on the other hand, had his time been almost wholly consumed in study, and even devotional exercises, the wants of his nume-

rous parishioners would have been deplorably neglected ; nor would his life, probably, ever have been adverted to as an extraordinary example to others. Even admitting that he descended to many particulars which it may not be expedient for a modern clergyman to notice, the great lines of his example still present themselves for imitation, without any danger lest a minister should be absorbed in secular benevolent projects.

5.—It is pleasing to discover, by written documents, that, vast and extensive as the exertions of Oberlin were, and continued with astonishing perseverance for above half a century, yet, so far from trusting to his good works as meritorious of the divine favour, his reliance was placed on the atonement and righteousness of his Redeemer. Conscious of his own sinfulness before God, he humbled himself and intreated mercy ; and, sustained by the hope of that mercy, cheerfully engaged in a series of efforts, from grateful love to his Saviour and compassionate regard to the welfare of his fellow-creatures ; thus furnishing a reproof to those who unscripturally

suppose that their benevolent contributions and efforts can entitle them to God's favour, although performed without respect to the merits of a Redeemer, and from another and lower principle than love to his name.



**BRIEF MEMORIAL.**

**OF**

**AUGUSTE BARON DE STAEL-  
HOLSTEIN.**

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**CHAPTER I.**

**M. DE STAEL EDUCATED AT PARIS—HIS MOTHER  
EXILED—HIS INTERVIEW WITH NAPOLEON—IS  
BANISHED — RETURNS TO PARIS — AN ACTIVE  
MEMBER OF THE PARIS BIBLE SOCIETY.**

THE amiable young nobleman, and true Christian philanthropist, whose name stands at the head of this chapter, was born at Paris, the 30th August, 1790; and, during his early years, was educated by his accomplished mother—well known by her literary publications—with the additional advantage

of being often near his grandfather, that distinguished statesman, M. Necker. He studied afterwards at Geneva and at Paris, under the tuition of M. Schlegel, a friend of the family, and now Professor at the University of Bonn.

When he was only 13 years old, the unmerited hatred and base political jealousy of Napoleon, occasioned the exile of his mother and the family from France. After a journey to Prussia, they returned to the family mansion at Coppet, near Geneva, to inter the remains of M. Necker.

M. de Staël was at a College in Paris, being 15 years of age, and about to enter the Polytechnic School, when his mother was again banished from France.

About this time he was placed under the care of the able and amiable pastor of Satigny, near Geneva, M. Cellierier Père, for the purpose of being instructed in religion; and he appears to have always retained a pleasing remembrance of that

period of his life, and of that excellent minister's affectionate regard. Madame de Staël, his mother, also entertained great respect for M. Cellerier, as is evident from a beautiful description, in one of her volumes, of the simple and sublime manner in which public worship was conducted by that pastor and his son, at the village church, on a day when the Holy Communion was administered.

A few years afterwards, the writings of Madame La Baronne de Staël having re-awakened the jealousy of the French Government, she was commanded to deliver up her MSS. and doomed to fresh exile. Her two sons solicited and obtained an interview with Napoleon, at Fontainebleau, with the hope that the rigorous measures exercised against their mother might be at least softened. Their filial piety, and noble firmness, however they might strike and even surprise the Emperor, did not procure a relaxation of severity. M. de Staël himself, indeed, was soon afterwards required to retire to Switzerland, and for-

bidden, without express permission, to set his foot in France.

Madame de Staël and her daughter having at length resolved to leave Switzerland, he remained alone a year at Coppet and Geneva; but, in 1813, rejoined his mother and sister in Sweden; afterwards visited England; and, in 1817, returned to France. On the 14th of July, in that year, his highly-talented mother died, and he accompanied her remains to the family-vault at Coppet.

It appears that in the afflicted state of his mind, after this loss, he gave a more earnest attention than he had given before to the great truths of religion, as momentous truths, affecting every individual's condition here and hereafter, and presenting sources of consolation of which those deeply feel the need who have learnt the instability of all earthly good, and the insufficiency of rank, fortune, and fame, to satisfy the thirst of man for happiness.

The formation of the Protestant Bible

Society at Paris, was an event calculated to call into action that sincere regard for the Word of God, and the welfare of men, which prevailed in the Baron de Staël's mind. He accordingly gave, not only the sanction of his name and influence, but personal aid towards its establishment, and became one of its Secretaries.

In two years afterwards, he, of his own accord, joined a deputation of persons, who called from house to house upon the Protestants to solicit subscriptions; and by his zeal, politeness, and affection, gained numerous friends to the Institution, whilst yet in its infancy. These visits gave him such an opportunity of witnessing the purifying, ennobling, and consoling influence of true religion, even amongst persons in low circumstances; and excited in him such a desire to advance in personal piety, that he cheerfully acknowledged himself a debtor to this and other religious Institutions; since, whilst he endeavoured to confer benefits, he had received benefits himself for which he could make no adequate return.

Amongst these he would doubtless reckon the intercourse opened with individuals distinguished for talents and piety in France, and other countries, and facilitated by his perfect knowledge of the English tongue.

One of the circumstances most favourable to the increase of religious knowledge in the French Protestant Church, is, unquestionably, the diffusion of the Holy Scriptures by means of the Protestant Bible Society thus established at Paris. Before that event took place, the zealous and benevolent Pastor Oberlin, of the Ban de la Roche, as we have already seen, had maintained a correspondence with the British and Foreign Bible Society, established a Dépôt in his parish, under the management of a few persons, and circulated about 10,000 Bibles and Testaments in various parts of France. When, however, a Central Society was at length formed at Paris, patronized by some of the Protestant Nobility, (the Marquis de Jaucourt, President,) and supported by the zeal of the Baron de Staël, as well as the Protestant ministers



of France, the wide field that lay open for exertions was more readily cultivated; so much so, that 313 Auxiliary Societies and Associations have been since formed in connexion with the principal Society at Paris. In these efforts many of the ladies of France have taken a very efficient part, yet, in such a manner, I believe, as not to deviate from the proprieties of their sex and station. Conformably to the injunction of a late eloquent Secretary,\* their influence has been, like the blood that circulates through the human frame, rather *felt* in its effects than obvious to the *sight*. Still, it is but justice to say, those unostentatious efforts from the first essays of the three pious peasants,† already described, in the mountains of Alsace, to the modest but admirable efforts of the Duchess de Broglie, in the metropolis, have largely contributed to the prosperity of the Institution.

\* The late Rev. John Owen.

† For an account of their efforts see pp. 63—71.

## CHAPTER II.

DEMORALIZED STATE OF PARIS — M. DE STAEL  
CO-OPERATES WITH VARIOUS SOCIETIES FOR  
RAISING THE STANDARD OF MORALS IN PARIS,  
AND GENERALLY IN FRANCE — A SOCIETY FOR  
CHRISTIAN MISSIONS AMONGST THE HEATHEN  
FORMED.

THE interests of civil and religious liberty being much under discussion, M. de Staël published two pamphlets, in 1819, characterized by a love of well-regulated liberty, and patriotic attachment to his country's weal. Other literary occupations also took up much of his time, especially complete editions of his mother's and his grandfather's works.

His religious impressions were, happily, so deep, that he was able gradually to triumph over that secular spirit which his

connexion with individuals and circles of a very worldly stamp might be in danger of promoting.

Another snare he was also enabled to avoid, that of uniting in sentiment with those philosophical men, of a tolerant and candid spirit, who entertain respect for many great truths contained in the Holy Scriptures, and who condemn the disingenuous artifices, the gross raillery, and open impiety of the school of Voltaire, and yet do not fully and cordially embrace the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel. M. de Staël was also candid and tolerant, but he felt deeply the necessity of uniting, to borrow his own words, "the most extensive philosophical toleration with the most intimate religious conviction." He was averse, therefore, to indifference as well as to intolerance. The consequence of such feelings was, that his philanthropy—for he was an indefatigable friend to mankind, especially the distressed and suffering—was Christian philanthropy; it possessed the high principle of religion, as a paramount motive to action,

in addition to other laudable but inferior motives.

In order to furnish the fullest proof that his benevolence was not limited to feeling, sentiment, or verbal approbation, it will be here desirable to exhibit some details relative to the moral condition and necessities of France and of its Capital, and, in connexion with such details, the efforts in which the Baron de Staël engaged, personally or associated with others, to provide suitable remedies.

In a city like Paris, where there is little regard comparatively to the precepts and restraints of religion, but where there is extraordinary vigilance on the part of the police-officers, it must be expected that the state of public morals will be lax on all points, except where the fear of the police, and of punishment in the courts of justice, shall operate to prevent crimes.

Perhaps one of the best criterions by which to judge of the actual state of public

morals, is the statement of the sums expended on certain amusements and speculations which are much in vogue in that country. For instance, it has been estimated that at the Gambling-houses of Paris,\* about 24 millions of francs are lost and won; and that the Lottery-offices absorb 25 millions of francs. There are not less than twenty-five great and small theatres at Paris, which are kept up at an expense of six millions of francs, and the principal evening for theatrical representations is the Sunday evening. There are about 300 actors, 200 dancers, &c. attached to them. On the other hand, a sum very little beyond that, (6,520,000 francs,) is what is paid for the support of Colleges and Schools of Education. A statement of such particulars cannot but be considered a very unfavourable index of the moral condition of that great metropolis, since the Gambling-house, the Lottery, and the Theatre, are unquestionably so many fountains from which streams

\* The tax paid to the Government, in 1822, amounted to 7,726,000 francs.



of the most deleterious quality pass into the whole frame of society.

M. de Staël was a member of a Society formed to resist some of those reigning evils, and others, namely, the "Société de la Morale Chrétienne," which comprises both Roman Catholic and Protestant members, publishes a Journal, and, whilst it especially advocates the cause of Christian morals, in opposition to the Slave-trade, (of which more will be said in a future page,) Gambling, and Lotteries, directs its attention also to the moral improvement of prisoners,\* and the care of orphans.

\* The "Conseil Général des Prisons" meets every Tuesday, at the Office of the "Minister of the Interior," to deliberate on what regards Prisons. It has been just stated that the "Société de la Morale Chrétienne," devotes its attention to Prisoners amongst other objects. A volume has been drawn up, and published in French, by T. F. Buxton, Esq. M. P. and the Rev. Francis Cunningham, (who has in other instances made laudable exertions for the benefit of France,) with a view to suggest methods for the amelioration of the state of those unhappy persons. A benevolent individual, M. Appert, has lately visited the condemned criminals



His regard for the temporal welfare of the lower classes, led M. de Staël to take an active part in the “Caisse d’Epargne,”

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in the Galleys at the French ports, with the hope of alleviating their dreadful lot.

The French prisons cannot be seen without express permission from Superiors in Authority. This I found on inquiry at the Prison-gates, and other inquiries occupying my time, I did not apply for the requisite permission in the proper quarter. I may briefly state, however, the following information.

1. In *St. Lazare* women are detained for years, and are employed in works of industry. The women thus acquire ability to work for a livelihood whenever dismissed, whilst part of their gains is also reserved for their advantage.

2. In *Les Madelonnettes* women detained for lesser offences are employed in sewing and spinning.

3. In *Petite Force* prostitutes who are confined there are compelled to spin wool or cotton.

4. *Grande Force*, a prison with eight separate departments.

5. *Sainte Pelagie* contains men detained for different offences; and it may be feared, that for want of due classification and proper precautions, prisoners harden each other in vice. The young boys are employed in spinning cotton and wool.

6. *Montaigu*, a military prison, in which a school has been very properly established.

or Savings' Bank. The improvident habits of the various descriptions of workmen in France, rendered such an institution highly desirable. Paris, however, had not been wholly destitute in former times of Institutions of a beneficial nature, calculated for that class of men; and I will here introduce a slight notice of two establishments originally formed for their advantage—the “Sociétés de Secours Mutuels,” and the “Etablissement de St. Joseph.”

### The Friendly Benefit Societies at Paris,

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7. *L'Abbaye*, also a prison for soldiers.

8. *La Conciergerie*, a temporary prison before judgment is pronounced at the Assizes. There the unhappy Queen Marie Antoinette was imprisoned. Her cell is now a chapel.

9. *La Maison du Refuge* is a prison for young offenders. They learn various trades, and are taught in schools in the prison; as all juvenile delinquents should be in English prisons especially designed for the young, and in which old offenders should not be confined.

In French prisons, where persons wish to be industrious, one-third of their profits is for the prison, one-third for the industrious prisoner, and one-third is given to him when liberated.

called "Sociétés de Secours Mutuels," are dated from the year 1694. By weekly contributions the workmen provide against the time of sickness and death. There are 164 Societies of this stamp, comprising 14,000 members.

The valuable Institution for workmen, called ETABLISSEMENT DE ST. JOSEPH, is intended to preserve the labouring class of men from the influence of bad example, to afford religious instruction, instil the love of industry, and help them forward to suitable employment. The establishment exists in an old convent, where workmen coming up from the country to Paris may, if they have good papers of recommendation, have soup for two or three days, till they find employment. There is a Roman Catholic Chaplain attached to the Institution. A few such establishments, of Protestant character, the inmates paying a moderate sum, might be very useful in some large cities in England, for the labourers from distant counties, and from Wales; especially if so managed as not to give

undue encouragement to emigrate from the country, and settle in overstocked cities. But more especially are such establishments expedient—under judicious arrangements—to receive well-recommended females who come from the country as servants, that they may have this preservative from bad company when they come up, inexperienced, to large cities, and that, when afterwards out of place, yet with untarnished character, they may know both where to find a lodging, upon moderate payment, and kind friends.

The condition of the lower orders in Paris urgently requires such remedies as the above, and similar Societies, bring to their notice; for the misimprovement of the Lord's-day, and consequent immorality amongst the lower classes, may be too painfully noticed at the several barriers of the city, near which there are Guinguettes, or houses where men, who have been industrious labourers during the week, enter into habits of vulgar dissipation, drinking to excess, and dancing, &c.; whilst, in one neighbourhood, the cruel sport of setting

dogs against wolves, or bulls, is practised. These are too evident proofs, indeed, of the want of such evening religious services, as well as Savings' Banks, and other Economical Institutions, as shall engage the attention and confidence, if possible, of an irreligious and improvident people; and obviate, at least in numerous instances, that distress which must be expected to overtake them in the time of sickness or old age, and that misery which awaits them in an approaching eternity.

The education of the children of the poor being one of the most powerful means of raising the people of a country from a state of moral degradation, M. de Staël cordially co-operated with those benevolent persons who were engaged in promoting that important object. In schools connected with the Reformed Church, he would naturally feel a strong interest; and even others, more expressly calculated to benefit the children of Roman Catholics, had a share of his regard. Accordingly, he was a supporter of the "Société pour l'In-



struction Elémentaire," which corresponds already with 300 schools, and 22 local societies, publishes two periodical works—"Journal d'Education," and, "Le Bon Genie, Journal des Enfants"—and adopts the use of De Sacy's New Testament in its schools.

The necessity of great exertions in reference to education in France, may be too clearly inferred from the painful but well-ascertained fact, that above 14,000 communes, or villages, are still unprovided with the means of instruction for the poor in the first principles of knowledge. As a detailed account of the present state of education in France has appeared in a former page,\* in the life of Oberlin, I must now only refer to that statement, and beg that the reader will re-peruse it in connexion with this allusion to M. de Staël's zeal in the cause of public instruction.

\* See page 46. Since these pages were penned, a decree has been signed by his Majesty Charles X. relative to the general establishment of schools throughout France.



I am unwilling, however, to dismiss a topic which I again find it necessary to touch upon, without introducing a few observations relative, first, to the low state of knowledge amongst even Protestants of the inferior class ; and, secondly, to the general ignorance prevalent in particular Departments of France.

One great benefit likely to attend the efforts of that Society in which M. de Staël took so warm an interest—the “ Protestant Bible Society”—is, that the researches of its active members will, eventually, lead to more strenuous exertions to promote education. The diffusion of the sacred volume will naturally excite numbers of persons to attain the art of reading it. Meanwhile, the inquiries instituted by the officers of that Society, and of its Auxiliaries, have brought to light affecting proofs of the low state of knowledge amongst the poorer description of Protestants—as the following statement, extracted from one of its reports, will at once discover—

	Population.	Unable to read.
La Tremblade . . . . .	1,169	713
St. Chaptes, Moussac, Dions, St. Dezeri, near Nismes . .	1,302	644
St. Geniez, Sauzet, La Rou- vière, La Calmette, Montig- nargues . . . . .	1,862	985
	<hr/> 4,333	<hr/> 2,342
Deduct one-fifth as probably under 7 years of age . . . .	866	
	<hr/> 3,467	

From this account, which seems to afford a very fair specimen of the condition of the poorer Protestants in country districts, we perceive, that amongst 3,467 persons above the age of seven years, as many as 2,342 were found unable to read the Scriptures. The tabular view of the French Reformed Church, in the Appendix, shews likewise that only 402 schools for the poor are found amongst 588 congregations. Such a state of things might well excite M. de Staël and his friends to attempt to open the fountains of knowledge to the poor; and seems imperiously to call for the adoption of circulating schools, long

since established in Wales, as the most rapid mode of diffusing knowledge, especially in conjunction with Sunday schools, amongst the mass of an ignorant population.\*

My next observation refers to the ignorance so generally prevalent in particular departments of France; which is probably to be attributed, in a great degree, to the obstacles which the colloquial dialects, or Patois as they are termed, present to the dominion of the French language. The Basque language, spoken in Basse Navarre, Soul, and Labour; and the Bas Breton, which is the vernacular tongue in the Departments of Finisterre and Morbihan, being, though now distinct from each other, of

\* Circulating Schools, established originally in Wales, and since successfully adopted in the Highlands, imply that the School-master, instead of being long stationary in a village, remains only 12 or 18 months, and then sets up a school in another village. The system is adapted to thinly-peopled districts inhabited by a poor peasantry, like the mountains of Dauphiné, the Cevennes, &c. As one master will, in the course of a few years, educate the people of many villages, it is an economical plan of education.

Celtic origin, it cannot be hoped that the people of those districts will emerge from the gloom of ignorance, until elementary books,\* in their respective languages, shall be composed, and schools instituted in which the vernacular tongue shall be taught in the first place, and French subsequently. Even as it regards other provinces of France, central and southern, where several dialects, more or less tinged with Celtic, prevail, and the people can neither speak nor understand pure French, the probability is, that upon accurate investigation it will be found necessary to commence with the process of preparing elementary works in each distinct dialect, as the preliminary step, and then lead on the learner to understand French in corresponding passages: for it is only when books shall be prepared in dialects which the people understand, that they will learn with facility and delight.†

\* The New Testament was published in Basque, at Rochelle, in 1571, and dedicated to Jane Queen of Navarre. The Gospel of St. Matthew has been recently printed at Bayonne.

† Compare the remarks in pp. 42—45.

As it respects the French tongue, it is certainly one amongst other symptoms of moral improvement in France at this time, that many elementary books, of a useful and religious stamp, have been printed and circulated within the last few years. The importance of such works to the rising generation will be at once appreciated, when it is recollected that the natives of that country were for many years intoxicated by false hopes of liberty, or false notions of glory; led into the labyrinth of a comfortless scepticism—hurried through the scenes of a sanguinary revolution—and, at length, stimulated in the career of ambition under a military despotism. Amongst these works some are designed for the intelligent, others for the less informed. Some advocate the cause of Christianity in opposition to Deism; others are designed to advance the education of youth; and those of a third description are calculated for the improvement of the middle and lower classes, not only by imparting the knowledge adapted to their station and occupations, but by inculcating a sense of their responsibility as accountable beings who must



exist hereafter, and thus counteracting the effects of those books, replete with deteriorating principles, with which France has been long inundated.

It would be easy to name a variety of admirable works that come under the above description ; but I proceed to mention that M. de Staël, with a view to render efficient aid towards increasing the number of such publications, not only concurred in the establishment of a “ Religious Tract Society” at Paris, but became its Treasurer. In connexion with the Central Tract Society, at Paris,\* sixty-seven Associations have been

\* Chez M. Servier, Libraire, Rue de l’Oratoire, near Rue St. Honoré. I was happy to avail myself of an opportunity, when last at Paris, to publish a tract of prayers for families and schools, compiled from the Liturgy of the Church of England, and arranged for every morning and evening in the week ; and also a tract, as an introduction or “ First Step” to reading the Scriptures. Of these tracts, which are stereotyped, the Paris Tract Society has permission to take and distribute any number of copies ; and I shall rejoice if the French Protestants in the more unenlightened districts should, like the Waldenses in Piedmont, who had 1,000 copies of each, welcome such humble visitors into their cottages and schools.



since formed in different parts of France, amongst the members of the Reformed Church. In this judicious attempt to disseminate religious information by means of tracts, zealous Protestants in the Metropolis had been anticipated by a very benevolent individual, the Rev. M. Lissignol, of Montpellier, who has for several years past, with indefatigable zeal, translated and circulated those useful little productions.

There is another religious society to which M. de Staël was also a firm and cordial friend—the “*Société des Missions évangéliques*”—a society which, though established for the purpose of enlightening the distant heathen, was likely to be of great utility in France itself, by the collateral benefit it would produce of reviving the declining zeal, and exciting the dormant sympathies of members of the Protestant church, and even diffusing more correct views of the nature of true religion. The impulse given to the French Reformed Church, in this instance, must apparently be traced to similar efforts in England, as a secondary cause. When I

travelled through France in 1814, I found that, in consequence of the suspension of intercourse occasioned by our unhappy wars, the French Protestants knew little about the exertions which British Christians had felt it their duty to make for the propagation of Christianity in heathen nations. I was therefore induced, when I returned to England, to draw up a work, entitled, "The Spirit of British Missions," containing not only arguments in favour of missionary attempts, and extracts to shew the condition of Mahomedan and Pagan nations; but also a brief history of every British Society which had engaged in evangelizing the world, from the early Societies "for Promoting Christian Knowledge," and "for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts," to the latest of the modern Institutions—in all twelve in number. It was presented to, and printed by, the Church Missionary Society; and translated into French, and published at Geneva in the year 1820,\* as well as after-

\* A translation by Professor Blumhardt, of Bâsle, into German, had been previously made, and widely circulated in Germany.

wards made the basis of a more extended work on Missions, entitled, "*Exposé de l'état actuel des Missions*," &c. It thus appears, in some measure, to have contributed to produce and extend that desire to benefit heathen countries, which has since shewn itself in France, and those Cantons of Switzerland in which French is spoken. From the latter, pecuniary collections are remitted to the Bâle Missionary Seminary,\* whilst at Paris a Missionary Seminary has been established since the year 1822, in which a few students are trained under the tuition of the Rev. M. Jeanpierre.† The Associations formed in aid of that Seminary throughout France, amount to above 100 in number; but the most encouraging circumstance, in reference both to the hoped-for success of the missions, and the increase of piety in the French Protestant Church, is,

\* The Waldenses, through the influence of friends at Geneva, have also formed a Missionary Association, and remitted sums of money to Bâle.

† Three of those students have lately departed from Europe to the Cape of Good Hope.

that the members of numerous congregations meet on the first Monday evening in every month, and unite in prayers for the Divine blessing upon the Christian efforts now adopted to evangelize heathen nations.

## CHAPTER III.

M. DE STAEL VISITS ENGLAND WITH THE DUKE DE BROGLIE—PUBLISHES “LETTRES SUR L’ANGLETERRE” — PROMOTES AGRICULTURAL IMPROVEMENTS IN SWITZERLAND—AN ADVOCATE OF OPPRESSED CHRISTIANS IN THE CANTON DE VAUD—TRAVELS IN FRANCE TO PROMOTE THE INTERESTS OF THE BIBLE SOCIETY.

IN the spring of 1822, M. de Staël visited England, with his brother-in-law, the Duke de Broglie. He arrived too late to attend the great religious anniversaries, held in the month of May; but was present at that of the “British and Foreign School Society,” and, when anxiously solicited, delivered an unpremeditated speech in English, replete with the noblest sentiments. During his residence in England, he employed himself in making accurate observations, and

collecting documents, for the purpose of composing his “*Lettres sur L’Angleterre* ;” a work which he published in 1825, and which has been considered, upon the whole, an eminently faithful representation of English Institutions and Manners, and comparatively free from both undue partiality and ignoble prejudice. He intended to add a second volume, which would have embraced the State of Religion, and our Religious Sects and Denominations, but had only written a few pages before his death. He travelled, at this time, over several counties, and as far as Scotland, and became more fully confirmed, especially from what he saw in the latter country, of the importance of a general system of education, and of religious instruction. He also became acquainted, during this journey to England, with many of the persons most distinguished for their Christian zeal and philanthropic efforts; and from what he witnessed, was more deeply convinced than ever, of the importance of combining family worship with, instead of allowing it to be superseded by, an attention to public duties.



A gentleman upon whom he called to assist him in the selection of some good horses for his experimental farm at Coppet, was in the habit of having family prayers, and the Baron begged to be permitted to attend. On another occasion he passed a Sunday at Mr. Wilberforce's house, and there witnessed, in a high degree, the happy effects of enlightened Christian piety. These two visits left an indelible impression upon his mind.

In the year 1823, M. de Staël engaged in agricultural undertakings on his estate at Coppet, from a patriotic wish to benefit both France and Switzerland. He also cherished the hope, that by introducing objects of utility of this nature, he should acquire the greater influence and power with respect to the moral improvements he might attempt. He endeavoured, particularly, to improve the different breeds of horses, by importing a supply from abroad; to obtain wool of superior quality, by mixing the different breeds of sheep; to fertilize the ground, and increase the quantity of her-

bage, by new methods of cultivating and manuring; to introduce machines and agricultural implements unknown in the neighbourhood; to make useful experiments with respect to planting and rearing trees; and, in other branches of rural economy, to promote every desirable improvement. Lest any failure should occur, and thus confirm the peasantry in prejudices which he wished to destroy, M. de Staël paid very assiduous attention to those various objects. Instead of exacting blind obedience to his orders, he tried to convince those who acted under him of the propriety of the plans pursued, and from time to time held conferences, at which the managers of each branch brought their respective reports of results obtained, and at which discussions took place as to the utility or inutility of various measures.

These occupations, however, did not withdraw his attention from religious subjects; and when an intolerant spirit shewed itself in the Canton de Vaud, in 1823, M. de Staël stepped forward as a champion of

religious liberty. Some of the younger ministers, and many people in that Canton, who, from the influence of religion upon their minds, paid more attention to the observance of the Lord's-day, and to social religious exercises, than their neighbours, were reproachfully denominated *Mômiers*.\* Even the Government of the Canton, and many of the Clergy, directed their influence against these religious persons, and compelled an English lady,† who had been active in promoting piety, to leave the Canton. In an Appeal, replete with eloquence and solid argument, M. de Staël addressed the Government and the public on the impropriety of such persecution in a Protestant country, which professed a regard for civil liberty, and whose very Protestantism had been built on the foundation of religious freedom. In order to repress the unjust, and ungenerous, and unchristian attempts of Protes-

\* A term of reproach invented of late years against religious persons, at Geneva, who met for devotional exercises. *Mômerie* means mummary, grimace.

† Miss Greaves.

tants to molest fellow-christians for their religious sentiments, whether in Switzerland or France, M. de Staël, who was a member of the Committee engaged in publishing the "*Archives du Christianisme*," inserted also two valuable papers in that periodical, in defence of the great and inalienable right of Christians to read the Holy Scriptures, and possess liberty of conscience, and freedom in religious worship. This noble interference, in the spirit of true wisdom and Christian moderation, was calculated, in an eminent degree, to protect those who were unjustly oppressed, and to enlighten the Government, and the Clergy in general, upon their principal duty—that of fostering and directing, but not repressing, that lively zeal and fresh ardour which appeared to animate the despised party; and hailing those symptoms as favourable to the more general revival of Christian piety, in an age when scepticism and lukewarmness have so widely undermined the foundations of Christian faith and practice.

The noble effort which M. de Staël made on that occasion, was, however, only, it has been truly said, “an episode” in the course of his laboriously useful life.

In the years 1822, 1823, and 1825, M. de Staël undertook the task of preparing the Reports of the Paris Protestant Bible Society; when, instead of confining himself to the mere detail of operations, he introduced valuable observations relative to those ameliorations of which his country and the Protestant Church were susceptible and stood in need. One of the remarks he introduced is so important, although a very simple one, that it deserves to be repeated wherever Bible Associations exist. “To collect donations,” he observed, “is not the most urgent matter; the most important thing is, that the Word of God should be read in every family.” Such a practice, in fact, is a source that may be depended upon for donations to supply heathen lands with the Scriptures. Those who read them devoutly will desire that others may be able to read them.



M. de Staël gave a still stronger proof of his attachment to the Bible Society, when, in the year 1825, he quitted Coppet to make a tour in the South of France, chiefly with a view to ascertain the actual state of the Protestant population, and to excite the zeal of the churches in favour of that Society and other religious Institutions. In his progress he visited Lyons, St. Etienne, Annonay, Valence, Lorient, Orange, Marseilles, Toulon, Nismes, Alais, Anduze, Montpellier, Toulouse, Montauban, Bordeaux, Rochefort, La Rochelle, and Nantes; rendering services which others could not but highly appreciate, though not disposed to set much value on them himself. The details of the journey were given in the Paris Bible Society's publications; nor can it be doubted that the increasing prosperity of that Institution, which now includes 313 Auxiliary Societies and Associations, was partly the result of that excursion of beneficence;—a tour comprising some of those cities which have been, as the Introduction to this volume amply proves, most remarkable in the Christian



history of France, as the seats of pure Christianity in the Apostolic age, of its revival during the dark ages, and of its triumphs both at and since the Reformation.

## CHAPTER IV.

M. DE STAEL'S EFFORT FOR THE ABOLITION OF  
THE SLAVE-TRADE—HIS MARRIAGE—JOURNEY  
TO ROME—RETURN TO SWITZERLAND—DEATH  
—CHARACTERISTIC TRAITS — CONCLUDING OB-  
SERVATIONS.

THE humanity and the love of freedom for which M. de Staël was conspicuous, induced him to take a strong interest in the welfare of the Greeks, groaning under the Ottoman yoke, and of the Negroes exposed to the cruelties inflicted by the Slave-trade.

When at Nantes, during his tour in France, in the year 1825, M. de Staël turned his attention afresh to the subject of the Slave-trade. He had already, for some years, engaged in efforts for its abolition. By active correspondence, both in

France and England, by the publication of several pamphlets, by energetic efforts as a member of the "Société de la Morale Chrétienne," and by personal representations to persons high in rank and office, he had prepared the way for the destruction of that infamous trade, by the authoritative measures of the French Government. But, as Nantes was the chief port of that horrid traffic, he resolved to investigate the matter in such a way as to dispel the doubts of those who were incredulous as to the extent to which it was carried. He therefore collected the names of persons who directed those "*spéculations homicides*;" he visited the slave-ships, some of which still retained marks of the blood of the victims; he found out the shops where the instruments of torture were made; he ascertained by what artifices and falsehoods the ships effected the object of the voyage, from their leaving the French port till their return; and he brought back to Paris a complete assortment of chains, bars, thumb-screws, iron neck-collars, and manacles, which, in order to awaken activity in the attempt at abolish-

ing the Slave-trade, he took from room to room, from office to office, from palace to palace, and shewed to the Royal Family, to the nobility in the Chamber of Peers, and to the friends of humanity at the anniversaries of different Beneficent Associations. It is not doubted that these exertions, principally, led to more vigorous proceedings on the part of the Government to suppress the enormous evil.

In the summer of 1826, he again visited England, being desirous to see the forms and usages prevalent at the time of a general election, and having also other objects in view. It was, indeed, his expressed opinion, that Frenchmen who engage in affairs relative to politics or religion, ought to visit England: and that Englishmen, also, might derive great advantages from seeing other countries; their views being enlarged by this means, and their manners softened. He returned from England to the Continent, with an impression that the luxury and excess too commonly characteristic of the social circles in England, appeared to attach

even to religious circles and enterprises, and threatened to undermine that dignified simplicity which marks the religion, and should adorn the disciples of Christ. Such an impression, it has been well observed, on the mind of a nobleman so ready to admire the English character, and to applaud the models of Christian piety found in England, deserves to be seriously weighed by religious persons of rank and opulence.

On leaving England he took the route of Switzerland, and was informed, at the first village, that a fire had destroyed his barns and out-houses, with all the hay. As might be expected, he was resigned under an event that was attended with considerable loss, as well as delay in his rural improvements. He soon afterwards paid his addresses to Mademoiselle A. Vernet, of Geneva, a young lady, who, like himself, had been instructed in religion by M. Cellerier, of Satigny; and, on the 6th of February, 1827, that venerable pastor gave the customary benediction at their marriage.

During the first part of the year he travelled to Italy with his bride, witnessing, with much sorrow, those pompous religious ceremonies in the Roman Catholic church, which, no less than the gaieties of fashionable life, withdraw men from reflection and self-examination; yet pleased to notice the establishment of the purer Protestant worship, though in comparatively small congregations, in seven Italian cities.

On his return from Italy, he again visited Paris, and then returned to Coppet, desirous to give renewed attention to a variety of objects, namely, the schools he had established; the little public library he had formed for the use of the peasantry; charitable visits to the poor, in which he was often their physician and minister, as well as friend; his experiments in rural economy; and his extensive correspondence. Those friends of M. de Staël who had the pleasure of seeing him at that time were delighted to see his mansion so evidently the seat of piety, benevolence, simplicity, and domestic bliss, whilst at the family worship,



which he had established before his marriage, the Baron himself read the Holy Scriptures, explained them in a manner adapted to the capacities of his servants, and prayed. The Sunday, more especially, was a day peculiarly delightful. The work of the house was diminished, the dinner-hour was earlier, that as many persons as possible might attend at church; and, in the evening, he had a service at the Château, at which many of the farm-servants and peasants, Roman Catholics as well as Protestants, were glad to be present, to join with the family and domestics in their devotions.

All this happiness and usefulness were mysteriously brought to a close, in the month of November in that same year! For on the 8th of that month, M. de Staël was attacked with a bilious fever that resisted every remedy, and, on the 17th, put an end to all his earthly joys and pains. On the first day of his illness he had been able to write to the Duchess de Broglie; but the progress of the disorder was afterwards extremely rapid. When

free from delirium, he devoted the intervals to prayer, and to meditation on the love and sufferings of his Redeemer; and, on the evening before his death, raised himself in his bed, and, calling for the attention of persons present, offered up a fervent prayer for himself, his family, and his country. The ground of his hopes, at that awful moment, were not any good works, (however numerous those which he had performed,) but the doctrine of reconciliation with God, through the sacrifice of his Son; and the peace of mind which he enjoyed in the prospect of so sudden a removal from this world, was the result of humble reliance on that love of God his heavenly Father, of which so conspicuous a proof had been given in the gift and death of his only-begotten Son. It was to God, through one only Mediator, that he addressed a prayer for himself, imploring mercy to eternal life—for his wife—the yet unborn infant—and his other much-loved relatives.

His sister, and her husband, the Duke de Broglie, hastened on the first information

of danger, but, before they could reach Coppet, they learned at Auxonne that their brother was no more. They did not arrive in time to assist at the funeral,\* but many persons around came to pay the last tribute of respect, and, the library serving as a chapel, the pastor of the parish, M. Simonin, in his prayers and sermon, tried to give a religious direction to the grief in which the auditory were absorbed; but, when the coffin was afterwards removed from the Château to the vault, no one was able to command his feelings sufficiently to utter a word. The body was deposited in mournful silence in the tomb, close by the mausoleum which stands in an inclosure, surrounded by shady trees, and contains the remains of M. and Mme. Necker, and Mme. de Staël. At his own particular request, he lies buried by the side of his mother, with his head placed near her feet.

\* Funerals in foreign countries often take place on the day following that of decease; a practice to be condemned, since, in some complaints, there may not be sufficient certainty that death has taken place.

Not only benevolence, (of which so many proofs have been afforded,) but humility and sincerity, were qualities strikingly characteristic of this accomplished and pious nobleman. His humility made it always painful to him to receive applause for those good actions in which he could himself perceive a great alloy of imperfection. His sincerity was such, that he engaged in many undertakings connected with promoting the temporal happiness of his fellow-creatures, before he would venture to engage in those strictly of a religious nature. The exalted ideas he entertained of the Christian Revelation, even prevented him from offering his co-operation till long after his own mind had been brought under the influence of religious motives. Whilst some, with too much confidence, appear before the public as more eminent Christians than they really are, he stood in need of sufficient confidence to appear before men as what he really was. Not that he wanted courage to oppose injustice, or to endure reproach; but he was long fearful lest he should not be equal to the task, or worthy of the office of an ad-

vocate of the holy cause of religion. It is evident, indeed, that Christianity, in all its simplicity and sublimity, was that which he wished to imbibe, and to exhibit by Christian graces, virtues, and actions, in their most genuine and attractive form. He loved simplicity, in fact, in all things; simplicity in divine service, as opposed to splendid ceremonies; simplicity in sermons, which made him prefer a warm extemporaneous to an elegant and highly finished discourse; simplicity in his charities as opposed to ostentation; simplicity in conversation, as opposed to the affectation of religious phraseology; simplicity in manners, in opposition to such singular habits as are sometimes the offspring of vanity, and defects even in the best characters.

What parent, what tutor, endued with proper feelings, would not wish to point to so virtuous, pious, sensible, benevolent, and patriotic a nobleman for the imitation of other young noblemen, who may be heirs to still higher titles, and much larger estates? And what young nobleman, alive to the



responsibilities and duties of a high station, would not wish to follow some of the steps of so amiable a private, so useful a public character as the late lamented Baron de Staël? In an age like the present, when respect for rank and station as such, has sensibly diminished amongst persons of the lower classes, it becomes a matter of the greatest importance that the noblemen of the land should acquire that ascendancy with which exalted moral worth alone can invest its possessors. In an age of spreading infidelity, which, generally accompanied as it is by disloyalty, threatens not only to loosen moral and social obligations, but, ultimately, to introduce such violent changes as shall endanger the very frame-work of society, men of rank and fortune should appear openly on the side of religion; not merely by a cold acknowledgment of its value for the purpose of restraining evil by its sanctions, and thus strengthening the arm of the Government and of the magistracy; but by sincere personal submission of the soul and its faculties, the life and its actions, to the controlling influence of the



Gospel, so as to exemplify its effects in the multiform fruits of a truly Christian philanthropy.

For the same reasons is it of the utmost consequence, that the gentlemen of England, generally, as well as her youthful noblemen, should be, and avow themselves, firmly attached to Christianity, scrupulously attentive to her prescribed ordinances, and cordially obedient to her precepts. The growth of irreligion amongst men of title, and men of property, could scarcely fail to become, as in France during the last century, the prelude to a fatal crisis. It would involve the probable loss of their estates in this world, as well as of their souls in the next. To raise a barrier against a possible evil of such fearful magnitude, to arrest the tendency of the rapidly growing degeneracy of an increasing population towards such a result, it is necessary to resort to such measures as the Baron de Staël, and his benevolent associates, adopted to repair the evils that such a crisis had produced in France. Religion must be adorned by individuals, cherish-

ed in families, fostered in schools for Christian education, and promoted by philanthropic institutions. Christianity must be regarded as a Divine Revelation, not a mere state-engine; and the piety of distinguished laymen should teach Clergymen to regard their sacred profession, not as a pathway to wealth, but to usefulness; and excite all, but especially those who are entrusted with the care of extensive parishes, to meet more adequately than at the present moment, the urgent wants of the ignorant and profane, in this nominally Christian land, particularly within the precincts and in the suburbs of cities and large towns.

## APPENDIX.

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### No. I.

#### ACTUAL STATE OF THE PROTESTANT CHURCHES THROUGHOUT FRANCE, WITH REMARKS.

THE mass of the Protestants of France may be divided into two classes:—1. those of the Reformed Church; 2. those of the “Confession of Augsbourg.” The latter are principally found in Lorraine and Alsace, provinces in which German has been a prevailing language, and which were annexed to France at a period subsequent to the era of the Reformation. Protestants of the latter communion have a church at Paris in Rue des Billettes.

The following pages refer to the first class of Protestants—those of the Reformed Church.

Instead of the severe edicts formerly promulged by kings of France against Protestants, there are now laws of a favourable and protecting nature ; and amongst the laws now in force relative to the French Reformed Church, I would more especially notice the following :—

1. None but Frenchmen, (or naturalized foreigners,) can exercise ministerial functions.

2. Those admitted to be ministers are required to have studied three years at the French Protestant University of Montauban.

3. Six thousand souls constitute a Consistorial Church, (which includes the Pastor, or Pastors, and from six to twelve Lay-Elders,) and five Consistorial Churches suffice to form a Synod.\*

4. The sum allowed by the Government to a Protestant minister is,

3,000 francs at Paris.

2,000 where the population is 30,000 or more.

1,500 where the population is from 5,000 to 30,000.

1,200 where the population is under 5,000.

\* In the French Churches that adopt the Confession of Augsbourg, five Consistorial Churches form an Inspection-district, and one Ecclesiastic is to be chosen Inspector, who, with the aid of two Laymen, is to watch over the churches and ministers.

N.B. The Chambers voted the sum of 676,000 francs for the Protestant Church, in 1828, and the Government has frequently, of late years, made grants to the Protestants to aid them in building new places of worship.

5. The descendants of French families, exiled on account of their religion in former times, may return and become naturalized :—a regulation worthy of the attention of pious individuals and families in England and other countries, who may wish to promote pure Christianity where their forefathers suffered for it.

When age, sickness, or infirmities oblige a Pastor to seek the aid of a Co-adjutor, the Government has always permitted such relief, and assigned a salary to the assistant, who is termed a “Suffragan.”

After these preliminary observations, I proceed to a tabular and condensed view of the state of the Reformed Church in France, (the Protestant Churches of the Confession of Augsbourg not being included,) extracted from “*Statistique des Eglises Reformées*, par A. Soulier,” published in 1828.

Department.	Consistorial Church.	Number of Pastors.	Number of Congregations.	Bible Societies.	Missionary Societies.	Tract Societies.	Schools.
Aisne, Seine-et-Marne	Monneaux . . . .	4	24	5	3	1	7
Hautes-Alpes . . . .	Orpierre . . . .	1	11	5	1	1	0
Ardèche . . . . .	Lanastre . . . .	4	4	2	1	1	0
	St Pierre-ville . .	4	7	2	0	1	1
	Privas . . . . .	4	8	2	1	0	4
	Vernoux . . . . .	3	3	2	2	1	3
	La Voulte . . . .	3	3	3	1	1	1
Aveyron . . . . .	Sainte Affrique . .	4	13	6	1	1	7
Arriège . . . . .	Mas D'Azil . . . .	6	12	7	2	1	8
Bouches du Rhone . .	Marseille . . . . .	3	4	5	0	1	2
Calvados . . . . .	Caen . . . . .	3	7	2	1	2	0
Charente . . . . .	Jarnac . . . . .	2	4	1	0	0	1
Charente Inférieure . .	Saintes . . . . .	4	17	1	0	1	0
	Tremblade . . . .	2	6	5	0	0	6
	Rochelle . . . . .	5	13	4	0	1	5
Dordogne . . . . .	Mont-Caret . . . .	3	6	5	1	1	2
	Bergerac . . . . .	3	7	5	0	1	2
Drome . . . . .	Crest . . . . .	5	5	6	1	1	4
	Die . . . . .	5	8	0	0	0	4
	Dieu-le-fit . . . .	6	19	8	1	0	10
	Mothe-Chalançon .	4	20	1	1	1	5
	Bourg-les-Valence	3	7	0	0	1	3



Gard . . . . .	Alais . . . . .	4	9	9	0	1	1	0
	Saint Ambroix . .	3	13	6	1	1	1	1
	Vézénobre : . . .	3	9	1	2	1	1	1
	Saint Jean-du-Gard	3	3	2	2	1	1	1
	Anduze . . . . .	3	3	2	2	1	1	1
	Uzès . . . . .	3	9	1	1	1	1	1
	Saint Chaptes . .	3	8	1	1	0	1	1
	Nîmes . . . . .	7	6	3	3	1	1	1
	Vauvert . . . . .	3	6	4	3	1	1	1
	Aiguevives . . .	3	10	6	3	1	1	1
	Calvisson . . . .	4	9	6	1	1	1	1
	Vigan . . . . .	4	8	8	1	1	1	1
	Sommières . . . .	4	4	2	0	1	1	1
	Valleraugues . .	5	10	5	0	0	1	1
	Saint Hippolyte .	3	2	1	1	1	1	1
	Salle . . . . .	4	5	5	1	1	1	1
	Sauve . . . . .	5	5	3	3	3	2	1
Haute Garonne . . . .	Calmont . . . . .	4	6	6	3	3	1	1
Gironde . . . . .	Bordeaux . . . . .	3	2	5	1	1	1	1
	Sainte Foy . . . .	3	5	5	5	1	1	1
	Gensac . . . . .	3	6	4	4	1	1	1
	Montpellier . . .	4	7	7	9	1	1	1
	Montagnac . . . .	3	6	4	1	1	1	1
	Marsillargues . .	3	5	4	3	1	1	1
Hérault . . . . .	Ganges . . . . .	2	2	4	1	1	1	1

Department.	Consistorial Church.	Number of Pastors.	Number of Congregations.	Bible Societies.	Missionary Societies.	Tract Societies.	Schools.
Hérault . . . . .	Isère . . . . .	3	11	6	6	1	20
Haute Loire . . . . .	Saint Voy . . . . .	1	5	1	0	0	1
Loire Inférieure et Vendée . . . . .	Nantes . . . . .	3	9	8	1	1	1
Lot et Garonne . . . . .	Tonneins . . . . .	2	7	1	0	1	5
	Clairac . . . . .	2	6	1	0	0	4
	Nérac . . . . .	2	4	4	4	1	2
	Lafite . . . . .	2	4	1	1	1	4
	Castelmoron . . . . .	2	10	1	0	0	3
Lozère . . . . .	Meyrueis . . . . .	2	4	5	0	0	4
	Florac . . . . .	2	2	2	0	0	4
	Vialas . . . . .	2	2	5	0	0	2
	Barre . . . . .	3	7	0	0	0	6
	St. Germain-de-Calberte . . . . .	2	2	2	0	0	0
Basses-Pyrénées . . . . .	Orthèz . . . . .	5	8	6	1	1	3
Bas-Rhin . . . . .	Strasbourg . . . . .	8	15	1	1	1	15
	Bisch-willer . . . . .	6	9	0	0	0	9
Haut-Rhin . . . . .	Mulhausen . . . . .	9	7	3	1	1	13
Rhone . . . . .	Lyon . . . . .	2	3	4	3	1	3
Seine . . . . .	Paris . . . . .	4	2	3	2	1	6
Seine-Inférieure . . . . .	Rouen . . . . .	3	8	3	1	1	2
	Bolbec . . . . .	3	11	8	3	1	3

Deux-Sèvres . . . .	Niort . . . . .	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
	Melle . . . . .	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
	St. Maixent . . . .	1	4	1	0	0	0	4
	Mothe-St. Heray . .	0	4	1	1	0	0	8
	Lezay . . . . .	1	1	1	1	0	0	2
Tarn . . . . .	Castres . . . . .	5	6	5	2	0	0	4
	Mazamet . . . . .	2	4	5	0	0	0	1
	Vabre . . . . .	3	5	5	0	0	0	2
	Lacaune . . . . .	2	4	8	0	0	0	9
Tarn-et Garonne . .	Montauban . . . .	4	2	7	1	0	0	1
	Négrepelisse . . .	4	4	5	0	0	0	0
Vaucluse . . . . .	Lourmarin . . . .	3	8	5	2	0	0	5
Vienne . . . . .	Rouillé . . . . .	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Loiret . . . . .	Orléans . . . . .	6	8	8	6	6	6	3
Nord . . . . .	Lille . . . . .	4	12	4	4	1	1	1
Moselle . . . . .	Metz . . . . .	4	8	1	1	1	0	7
Doubs . . . . .	Besançon . . . . .	2	1	1	1	1	1	3
Ardennes . . . . .	Sedan . . . . .	1	2	1	0	0	0	2
Gers . . . . .	Mauvesin . . . . .	1	1	1	0	0	0	1
Somme . . . . .	Amiens . . . . .	1	2	2	1	1	1	0
Ain . . . . .	Ferney . . . . .	1	1	1	1	1	0	2
Bouches-du-Rhone . .	Aix . . . . .	0	1	1	1	1	1	0
Oise . . . . .	Ageux . . . . .	0	1	1	1	1	1	0
	Oratories.							

Department.	Oratories.	Number of Pastors.	Number of Congregations.	Bible Societies.	Missionary Societies.	Tract Societies.	Schools.
Vosges . . . . .	St. Dié . . . . .	0	1	0	0	0	0
Gironde . . . . .	Libourne . . . . .	0	1	1	1	1	0
Juy-de-Domé . . . . .	Clermont-Ferrand .	1	1	0	0	0	0
Cote D'Or . . . . .	Dijon . . . . .	0	1	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL*</b>		<b>286</b>	<b>588</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>402</b>
Consistorial Churches	85						
Oratories	10						

\* This total is at variance with an Abstract in another part of M. Soulier's work, in which the numbers are stated as follows:—305 Pastors, 438 Places for Public Worship, 451 Bible Societies and Associations, 124 Missionary Societies and Associations, 59 Tract Societies, 392 Daily Schools.

The discrepancy between the two statements is, in part, to be accounted for thus:—

1. In the Total 286 are only included the Pastors whose names are expressed, in that of 305 are included those whose names were unknown.
2. The Total 438 refers to consecrated edifices, that of 588 comprises congregations in private houses, and those assembled in the open air.
3. The Total 313 refers to the principal Bible Societies and Associations, that of 451 comprises those of a very minor description.

4. The Total 102 also refers to the larger, whilst that of 124 includes the lesser Missionary Associations.

5. A similar observation applies to the Total 67, contrasted with the Total 59, relative to Tract Societies.

6. The difference between the Total of 392 Schools and that of 402, arises apparently from the latter including a few small schools omitted in the other total; whilst the larger total also excludes the notice of Boarding Schools for Protestants of the higher classes of society, as well as Sunday Schools, of which there were only 79 existing in France in the year 1828.

Whilst it is delightful to observe that the French Reformed Church, after having been more than once, apparently, near extinction, through severe persecutions, not only still survives, but is acquiring fresh strength, it naturally occurs to the mind to inquire what symptoms there are of a revival of piety, and by what means that church may acquire still higher improvements. Having seen the French Protestant Churches at different periods, as early as the year 1814, and as late as the year 1829, I will venture to offer a few thoughts upon this subject.

It is believed that the French Protestants of the Reformed Church amount to between a million and a million and a half; in which case it is obvious that the 286 Pastors are a very inadequate number compared with the wants of their church. The poverty of many congregations is a principal cause of this lamentable deficiency. Some districts are without pastors, having the advantages of the Christian ministry occasionally, but with a long interval between each visit. The necessity of studying for three years at the College of Montauban, before admission to Holy Orders, increases the difficulty of applying a remedy, because it increases ex-

pense and occasions delay. Such a state of things evidently requires that the pastors should, as far as their health and strength will permit, exert themselves in preaching more frequently to the congregations committed to them. A practice prevails amongst Foreign Protestants highly prejudicial to their country congregations, I mean that of committing sermons to memory, after writing them. The consequence is, that a dry theological dissertation, even if quite orthodox and evangelical in point of sentiment, is delivered, rather than a deeply earnest discourse, expressed in simple language, adapted to the poor, and calculated to search the conscience and raise the affections. Unhappily, also, a preacher seldom ventures to commit more than one sermon to memory, and therefore preaches but once in the week. If, on the contrary, the preacher would read his sermons, and especially if, after carefully studying his subject, he would preach from notes, he might easily preach twice, and, if a strong man, thrice on the Sunday, with more warmth, and with more profit to the poorer class of hearers. In this way one pastor would multiply himself into two or three, because he would undertake as many sermons as two or three now undertake. One happy result of preaching evening as well



as morning discourses, would be the better observance of the Lord's Day in France. Sunday evening has been from time immemorial devoted to pleasure. It is then that the theatres, as well as the places of vulgar dissipation, are most frequented. Whether the practice originated in the commencement of the Christian Sabbath on Saturday evening, in the more ancient times, though unobserved at present, I will not stop to examine, but it is an evil fraught with other evils, which all true Christians should try to correct. Protestant ministers, by having an evening service and sermon, at six o'clock, or soon after, would be able to preserve their flocks, in a good measure, from the snare which surrounding dissipation spreads for them, whilst their example might eventually induce the Roman Catholic Clergy, by degrees, to adopt so salutary a custom.\* Besides preaching more frequently, the Protestant Ministers in France, who would promote the spiritual prosperity of their flocks,

\* When I was at Paris, there was evening service at the English Episcopal Chapel at the Hotel de Marbœuf. I also witnessed, occasionally, an immense congregation in the evening, to hear the Roman Catholic Missionaries at St. Geneviève. I have been informed that an evening service has been established, within the last few months, at the Protestant Church of the Oratoire. How essen-

will find it essential to enforce the practice of family devotion—a much-neglected duty amongst members of their church—as well as to raise the tone of piety in their congregations by a selection of superior psalms and hymns, with a suitable variety of tunes, better adapted to express Christian feeling than the psalms now in use.

In order to supply, in future, many pastors disposed to apply themselves in this earnest manner to preaching and other pastoral duties, it appears desirable that the French Protestants should not exclusively, or even chiefly, fix their hopes upon unstable youth, or children, and design them for the ministry, and give them an education of many years' continuance, at considerable expense, before they go to College, and encourage their entering the ministry as a respectable profession, for

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tial such a service in large English parishes is, the crowds who attend open churches, and the crowds who pass by the doors of the church if closed, best testify. The altered circumstances of society shew, on the other hand, that the Wednesday and Friday Morning Prayers are not congenial with the habits of the present age, as few persons attend.

the sake of a livelihood, whilst the reality of their Christian piety and zeal may be matter of doubt. For many of the congregations much more suitable pastors would be obtained, if young men of conspicuous piety were selected from the Protestant congregations, withdrawn from the trades in which they may be engaged, and educated, at a moderate expense, under some learned and devout pastor, in the necessary branches of knowledge. Even without a College education, such men would be valuable pastors for the more obscure and sequestered village congregations, and if residence at College should be absolutely required in future, as at present, they would be likely to come out so well qualified to instruct others as to occasion no disappointment to those who had contributed to their maintenance.\* Endued with the wisdom which is from above, and entering the Christian ministry with an aim to do

\* I suppose, from the information given me, that there is a small College, or Academy, at Dieu-le-fit, near Valence, and another at Chatillon-sur-Loire, near Sancerre, suitable for such students for the ministry. The pupils of the Rev. M. Rousselotti teach in the Schools for the poor, especially Sunday Schools. Such a practice is a good preparatory step towards forming schoolmasters, and even village pastors.

good to others rather than to acquire gain, they would, in all probability, be found wise in the art of winning souls, and training them for heaven; and whatever falls short of that, falls far short of the dignity and utility of the pastoral office. If, however, it be found inexpedient to select such pious young men for the ministry, their education under able pastors, for the purpose of becoming schoolmasters, as well as catechists of a superior stamp, is of great importance.

The number of congregations in the preceding table, namely 588, compared with the number said to have existed in the year 1,560, namely 2,000, furnishes affecting evidence of the havoc made by subsequent persecutions, partly by putting numbers of the Protestants to death, and destroying their temples; partly by expelling other Protestants from the kingdom, to the great loss of France in a commercial point of view;\* partly by inducing many who remained,

\* Some idea of that loss may be formed from the fact, that Lyons once possessed 18,000 looms for the manufacture of silk, but that after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, the expulsion of the Protestants, and ruinous wars that followed, they decreased to 4,000. Num-

to unite themselves to the Church of Rome. Let me be permitted to add, however, a passage from another work,\* in reference to persecution :—" If France was once distinguished for the most disastrous effects of religious animosity, it should be mentioned, to the honour of the mild and amiable Louis XVI., that he granted to the Protestants religious privileges which his predecessors had withheld ; and it is due to its Government to state, that at the present moment Protestants are admitted as Peers and Deputies in the representative Chambers of that great kingdom ; and that Protestant ministers are generously maintained, and their temples repaired, by an allowance from the public treasury."

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bers of the expelled silk weavers came and established themselves in Spitalfields, London. The commercial losses of France at that period, were stated in a work, by M. le Comte de Boulainvilliers, called " *Etât de la France*," published in 1727.

\* Peyran's *Historical Defence of the Waldenses*, Appendix, page 439.

## No. II.

## ACT OF SELF-DEDICATION.

ETERNAL and infinitely holy God! I earnestly desire to be able to present myself before thee with a feeling of deep humility, and with contrition of heart. I know how unworthy a worm of the earth like myself is to appear before thy divine Majesty, before the King of kings and Lord of lords, especially on an occasion like this, when I intend to enter into a covenant with thee.

But thou, O merciful God, who hast formed the plan of this covenant, hast, in thine infinite goodness, proposed it to me by thy beloved Son: and it is thou who hast disposed my heart to accept it. I come then unto thee, and confess that I am a great sinner; I smite upon my breast, and say with the penitent publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner." I come



because I have been invited in the name of thy Son, and I rely entirely on his complete righteousness.. But I beseech thee, for his sake, to forgive mine unrighteousness, and to remember my sins no more;—I beseech thee to be reconciled to me, though so unfaithful. I am now convinced of the right thou hast over me, and there is nothing I more desire than to belong to thee. Most holy God! I solemnly dedicate myself to thee this day.

Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth! I avow this day that the Lord is my God! I this day declare that I am one of the number of his children, and of his people. Hear my words, O God, and write in thy book that I desire to live henceforth wholly unto thee. In the name of the Lord God of Hosts, I this day renounce all other lords who have formerly had dominion over me—the former pleasures in which I have indulged, and the corrupt desires of the flesh. I renounce all that is perishable, that my God may be my all. I consecrate to thee all that I am and all that I have; the faculties of my soul, the members of my body, my property and my time. Help me, O Father of mercies, to employ the whole to thy glory, and to that alone, by

obedience to thy will and commandments. To be thine shall be my humble and ardent desire through the ages of a blissful eternity. If thou art pleased to employ me in this life to lead others to thee, give me strength and courage to declare myself openly on thy behalf; and grant me such a measure of thy grace, that I may not devote myself alone to thy service, but that I may be able to persuade my brethren to consecrate themselves also.

It is my desire, O Holy Spirit, to remain faithful to thee to the end of my life, if supported by thy grace. Enable me, therefore, during the time that shall be yet allotted to me, to acquire that in which I am deficient, and to amend my ways. Let earthly things have no undue influence over me; but during the short term of life let me live solely to thee. Let thy grace strengthen me not only to proceed in that way which I have ascertained to be the best, but to walk in it with still greater activity. I resign myself, and every thing that belongs to me, to thy guidance. Overrule all circumstances as thine infinite goodness shall see best. I commit myself to thee for the ordering of all events, and say without any restriction, "Thy will, not mine,

be done !” Employ me, Lord, as an instrument ordained to thy service. Look upon me as one of thy people ; wash me in the blood of thy well-beloved Son ; clothe me with his righteousness ; sanctify me by his Spirit ; conform me more and more to his image ; purify and fortify my heart ; grant me the comfort of passing through life with a continual sense of thy presence, O my Father and my God ! and after having sought to obey thee and to submit to thy will, receive me to thyself, at the season and in the manner that shall seem good in thy sight. At the moment of death, at the very gates of eternity, assist me to remember these engagements, and employ even my last sigh in thy service. And do thou, Lord, also remember this covenant when thou shalt behold the anguish of my heart in my last moments, and when I may not even have strength to remember it. O, Heavenly Father, cast a look of mercy upon thine enfeebled servant in his last conflict with death. I would not presume to dictate, O my Father, in what way I should be removed hence. I would not even ask to be then preserved from severe suffering. Nothing of that nature would I make the subject of my prayers. But, what I earnestly intreat, in the name of Jesus, is, that I may be

able still to glorify thee in the last days of my pilgrimage, and in the midst of the sufferings which thy wise providence shall perhaps see fit to appoint, to manifest patience and submission to thy holy will. Fortify my soul, grant me humble confidence when thou shalt call me hence; receive me to thine eternal favour and presence, to the mansions of those who have slept in Jesus—mansions where inexpressible and unfading joys will be the portion of thy saints. And fill my soul with peace and happiness, whilst waiting for the accomplishment of the promise which thou hast made to thy people, that they shall partake of a glorious resurrection and for ever enjoy the bliss of thy presence.

And if, when I shall be lying in the grave, these pages shall haply fall into the hands of friends, whom I shall have left on earth, O grant that their hearts may be deeply affected; vouchsafe them grace, not merely to read them as an expression of my feelings, but to feel themselves that which they express. Teach them to fear the Lord my God, and to come and seek refuge with me under the shadow of his wings for time and for eternity; let them share in all the benefits and blessings of a covenant-relation with thee by Jesus Christ,

the great Mediator. To him and to thee, O Father, and to the Holy Ghost, be ascribed eternal praises by the millions of thy redeemed, and by those holy angels of whose employment and happiness they partake.

My God, and the God of my fathers ! Thou who keepest thy covenant, and pourest down thy blessings, even to a thousand generations, I humbly beseech thee, since thou knowest the deceitfulness of the heart, to assist me by thy grace, to enter into this covenant with all sincerity of heart, and to continue faithful to that consecration of me unto thee which took place at my baptism. May the name of the Lord be to me for an everlasting testimony that I have signed the promise to this effect with a full and firm intention to keep it.

JEAN FRÉDÉRIC OBERLIN.

*Strasbourg, the 1st January, 1760.*

*Renewed at Waldbach, the 1st January, 1770.*



## No. III.

AN EASY METHOD OF INSTRUCTING ADULTS.  
TO READ.

THE chief object in instructing ignorant adults to read is to enable them to read the Scriptures. With this view I thought it might be useful to select and arrange all the words in the Sermon on the Mount (5th, 6th, and 7th chapters of St. Matthew,) beginning with the alphabet, then proceeding to the monosyllables, and so step by step to the longest and most difficult words. Having published such a small introduction to reading the Scriptures in English, I afterwards, when at Paris, arranged the same chapters, for the same purpose, in French, for the use of poor Protestants in France, should the plan be approved, and of the Vaudois in Piedmont. To this latter piece, called "Le Premier Pas," a short address was prefixed, explaining an easy method



of teaching persons to read ; the substance of which is as follows.

The “Premier Pas,” or “First step to reading the Holy Scriptures,” calculated for either adults or children, is more especially so for those who live in remote villages and thinly peopled districts, where no school-masters or school-mistresses can be supported by the peasantry.

The ability to read the Sermon on the Mount (after reading all the words in the ten pages of the “Premier Pas,”) may be soon acquired by those who may be willing to give up one hour during the long evenings of a winter, and one or two hours on the Lord’s day ; and when able to read fluently the Sermon on the Mount, they will be able to read other parts of the New Testament with little difficulty.

Let us suppose that there are five persons in a small village who can read, and whose benevolence shall prompt them to teach their neighbours who cannot.

(1.) Let each of these five persons get about

ten persons who cannot read around him, every one of them having the "First Step," in his hand.

(2.) Let the teacher shew them where the lesson begins, and then let him pronounce distinctly a letter or word. Then let the person at his right hand repeat the same letter or word; and the next person do the same; and so on till every one shall have pronounced it. Let the teacher afterwards repeat the same, and let the person at his left hand next repeat, and the next afterwards, till every one shall again have repeated it. The letter, or word, will thus have been pronounced above twenty times; and if each person has constantly looked at it in the book, whilst it was pronounced by all present, it will be deeply fixed in the memory. If any one, through inattention, makes mistakes, he should yield his place to one more attentive to the lesson.

(3.) At the end of each lesson, in order to ascertain the reality and extent of progress, the teacher should question all the learners indiscriminately, making them pronounce here and there, not in exact order, the letters or

words learned during that lesson. He should do the same at the end of every week, with respect to the lessons learned during that week.

(4.) When the learners are able to read fluently all the words in the "First Step," they will of course read the Sermon on the Mount, either in, or extracted from, St. Matthew's Gospel.\* When that Sermon has been read repeatedly, and with attention to the stops, they may proceed to read other parts of the Scriptures, in which only occasional difficulties will occur.

In this easy manner may the ignorant obtain access to the treasures of that Sacred Volume, which is able, with the blessing of God's Holy Spirit, to make them wise unto salvation, through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

\* In the National Schools the Sermon on the Mount is printed in the form of a tract. So it is by the Paris Religious Tract Society.

## No. IV.

A PRAYER WHICH M. OBERLIN AND HIS WIFE  
WERE ACCUSTOMED TO USE TOGETHER.

HOLY SPIRIT! descend into our hearts; and assist us to pray fervently, and from the inmost soul. Suffer thy children, O merciful Father, to present themselves before thee, to implore whatever may be expedient for them!

May we love each other only in thee, and in our Saviour Jesus Christ, as being members of his body!

Be thou our helper, in order that, during the whole day, we may look unto thee, walk before thee, meditate and rest upon thee; so that, from day to day, our life may become more truly spiritual.

Grant that we may be faithful to thee in the discharge of our duties, and that we may stimulate each other to the same, making known to each other our faults, and seeking pardon together through the blood of Jesus Christ.

Whenever we pray together—and may we do so frequently—be thou, O Lord Jesus, one in the midst of us; and do thou, Heavenly Father, make us truly fervent; and hear, for the sake of Jesus Christ, what thou mayest teach us, by thy Holy Spirit, to ask!

Since thou hast placed those of our household under our control in the present life, give us wisdom and strength to guide them in a way pleasing unto thee. May we always give them a good example, and do that which thou hast told us of Abraham, who commanded his children, and his household after him, to keep the way of the Lord, and do that which is just and right. If thou shouldst give unto us children, and preserve them, graciously enable us to bring them up for thee; to teach them, early in life, to know, to fear, to love, and to call upon their God, who hath made a covenant with

them ; in order that, in conformity with their baptismal engagements, they may continue faithful unto thee from the cradle to the grave. Oh may we instil into them thy word, Heavenly Father, all our life-time, with meekness, affection, and patience ; when they rise up and when they lie down, when they are in the house and when out of it, and in all other suitable situations and circumstances ; since this is both pleasing in thy sight, and proper with regard to children, on whom thou hast bestowed the breath of life, chiefly that they may delight to approach unto, and walk humbly before thee.

When we go together to partake of the Lord's Supper, oh grant us, ever, new measures of grace, fresh strength, and renewed courage, that we may persevere in walking in the way heavenward ; and since we can only receive that holy Sacrament four times in the year, may we the oftener, yea, daily and hourly, partake of it by faith ! May we ever have death before our eyes, and ever prepare for it ; and—if the request be such as we may presume to utter—grant that we may not be long separated from each other,



but let the death of the one be followed shortly afterwards by that of the other.\*

Hear us, merciful Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, thy beloved Son. *Amen.*

\* Oberlin, for the happiness of his species, lived forty-two years after his wife's decease.

## No. V.

MONUMENT TO OBERLIN'S MEMORY, AND AN IN-  
STITUTION TO PERPETUATE INFANT SCHOOLS AT  
BAN DE LA ROCHE.

THE friends of M. Oberlin have, since his de-  
cease, erected a Monument to his Memory, in  
the Church of Waldbach. It is a tablet of  
black marble, on which a piece of white  
marble—a sculptured portrait of the deceased—  
has been incrustcd. The inscription, in French,  
is as follows :—

TO JOHN FREDERIC OBERLIN,  
Pastor and Parent of this Parish,  
during 59 years.

Born in 1740 ; died in 1826.

The memory of the just shall be blessed

Prov. x. 7.

Not satisfied, however, to have raised a marble tablet, his friends have been farther anxious to erect a living monument—a monument of charity—bearing the name of Oberlin, and transmitting to posterity a perpetual record of his wise philanthropy, and his anxiety to promote the social and domestic virtues. Accordingly, they have determined that it shall be a Foundation for granting, (if an adequate sum should be raised,) a salary of 100 francs (£4. sterling) a-year to each of the *Conductrices* who undertake to teach in the Infant-schools, in the several villages once under Oberlin's pastoral care.\*

By this means, those benevolent but poor women, who, being obliged to earn a livelihood, could only attend, about once a week, will be able to give up their time regularly to the instruction of the little children.

The idea of Infant Schools is supposed by some to have originated with Stuber, although brought into full activity by Oberlin. At the distribution of prizes, lately, at the French Aca-

\* An account of these Infant Schools, and of the *Conductrices*, has been already given in pp. 41, 42.

demy, one, however, was adjudged, after an oration by Baron Cuvier, to Louisa Schepler,\* Oberlin's housekeeper, as the foundress of Infant Schools.

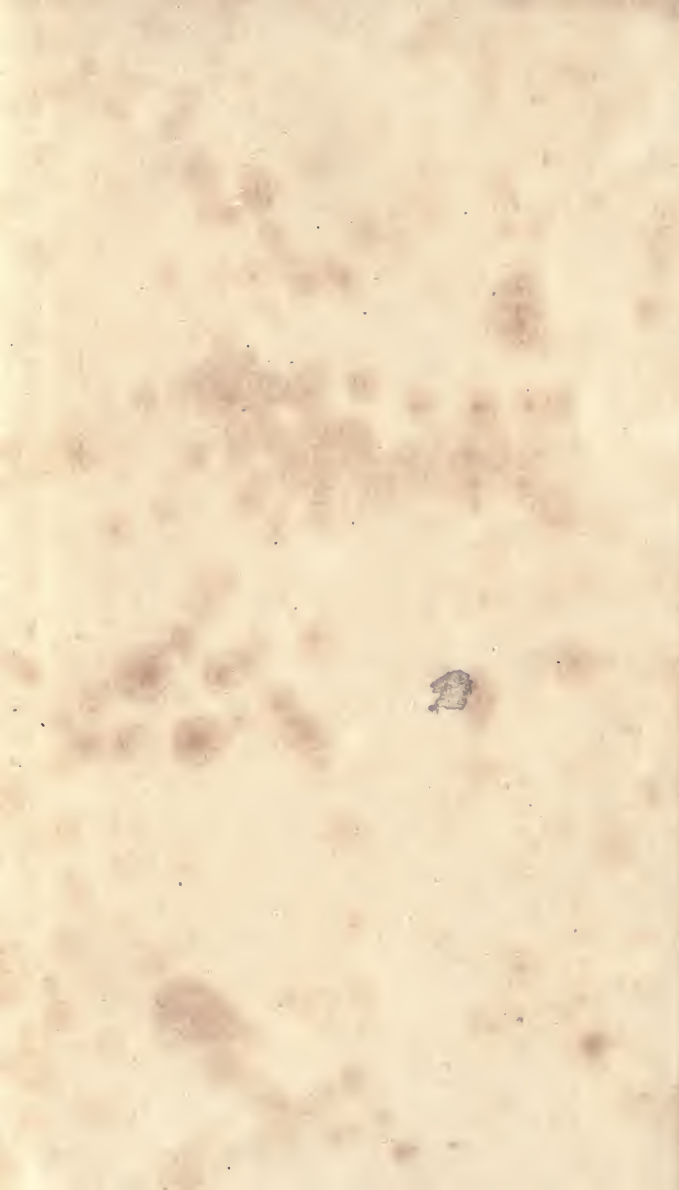
\* See pp. 71, 72 for an account of Louisa Schepler.

THE END.









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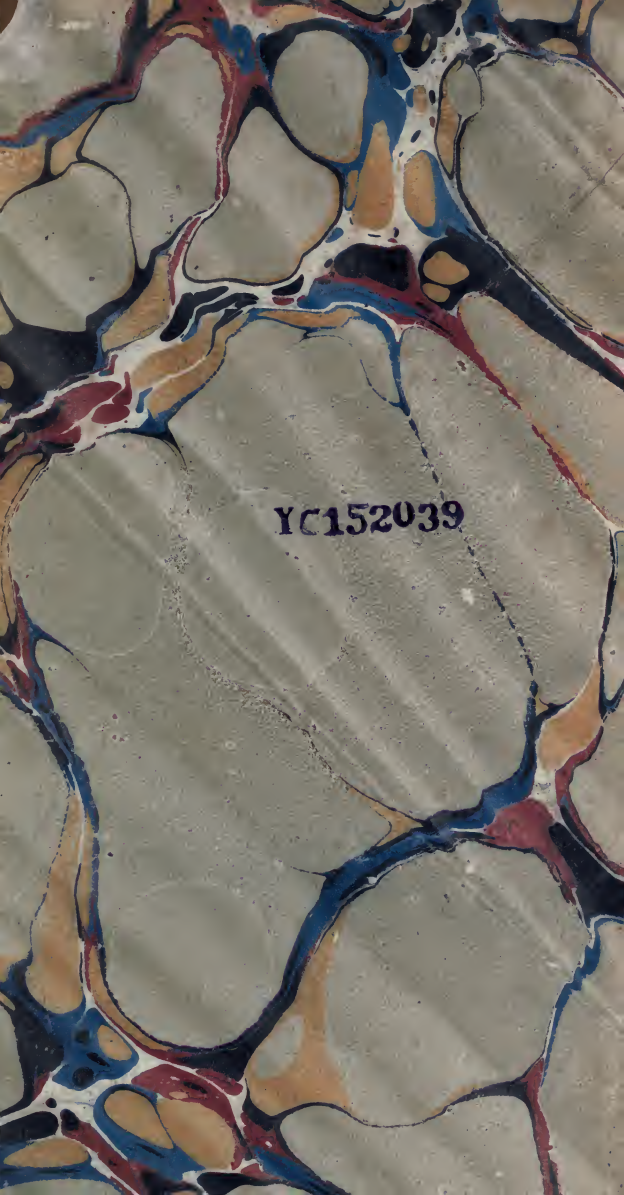
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The image shows a piece of marbled paper with a complex, organic pattern. The pattern consists of large, irregular, light-grey or off-white shapes that resemble cells or stones, separated by thin, winding lines of dark blue, red, and ochre. The overall effect is a rich, textured background. In the center of the image, there is a dark, rectangular stamp containing the alphanumeric code 'YC152039' in a bold, sans-serif font.

YC152039

